



"Ralph took it eagerly, letting his horse come to a walk."—page 129.

The Dial of Destiny

BY

FREDERICK LUTHER KOONTZ

“And thus the pendulum has
swung again to the right and to the
credit side of the case in its tireless
song of debit, credit, debit, credit.”

Boston, Mass.

THE ROXBURGH PUBLISHING COMPANY
Incorporated

Copyrighted 1911

BY DR. FREDERICK L. KOONTZ

All Rights Reserved

FOREWORD

"The dice of God are always loaded. The world looks like a multiplication table or a mathematical equation, which, turn it how you will, balances itself. Every secret is told, every crime is punished, every virtue rewarded, every wrong redressed, in silence and certainty. Crime and punishment grow out of one stem.

The human soul is true to these facts in the painting of fable, of history, of law, of conversation. It finds a tongue in literature unawares. There is a Nemesis, who keeps watch in the universe and lets no offence go unchastised.

Emerson.

Let us follow the pendulum of time as it swings to and fro, through a simple narration of human affairs and read, from the dial, the composite picture of weal and woe.

CHAPTER I.

AT THE CLINIC.

The bell had just announced the hour for clinic and was the signal for a general rush of students to the amphitheatre. A few of the more industrious had already passed in to secure favorable seats. Among them was a young man of twenty-one. His bright eye and intelligent face, set off to advantage by a neat figure handsomely dressed, gave him an air and appearance that bespoke gentle breeding and a liberal education.

As he passed through the waiting room, his attention was attracted by two persons, singularly attired, who had come to take advantage of the free treatment that is offered to thousands of the poor in every city of the land. Other students passed without taking any notice of them, but Ralph Henry stopped and, addressing the elder, asked if they had been waited upon. His tone was kind and his manner just as gentlemanly as if he were addressing a guest in his mother's drawing room; quite contrary to the way that students generally address "clinics."

"No, I ain't, an' I've been waitin' here over an hour," gruffly answered the old lady. At the same time Ralph noticed the younger, who was apparently

her daughter, give the old woman's tattered shawl a tug, as if in remonstrance.

"Don't talk to the gentleman that way," she whispered.

"Well, they ought to have someone here to 'tend to people," was the fierce rejoinder.

"But, madam," explained young Henry, **after** looking at her card, "you are registered in a special clinic and the hour has just arrived. You will be attended to in a few minutes."

"It's time," she muttered.

Professor Charts entering, Ralph bowed respectfully, and passed on toward the clinic. He paused at the door long enough to get a glimpse of the face of the younger, who had kept it hidden upon her mother's shoulder up to that moment. She was now begging the old woman to take her home.

"No! What did I bring you down here for? D'ye reckon I'll take you back home an' get a beatin' from the ol' man? I've been a-waitin' now a month on account of your foolishness. My ol' man hain't got no money to waste on doctors an' medicines; 'sides he says he does the political dirty work for Vic Noodles an' the city owes him a livin', anyway, 'n he told me last night that if I didn't bring you to the clinic to-day an' see what was ailin' you, he'd beat me within an inch of me life, an' you know my ol' man means what he says."

The young girl's only answer was to bury her face in her hands and sob piteously.

"Hush up! Th' ain't nothin' goin' to hurt ye," said the old lady reassuringly.

"Oh, but mother, this is such a terrible place! I just can't go in there where all those students are. I can't, I can't; I'd rather die," she sobbed.

After hearing this conversation, Ralph passed on and took his seat just as the lecture started. After a few preliminary remarks, Prof. Charts asked if there were any patients.

"Yes, sir, a young girl," the nurse replied, "but she refuses to come before the class."

"Mr. Henry," said Professor Charts, "will you please step out and see what the trouble is?"

It was the custom of the faculty to call upon members of the class for favors of this kind and even to assist in minor operations. This much-coveted favor usually fell to the men who occupied the first two or three rows of benches. Ralph left his seat with conscious pride and, as usual, stamping of feet, whistling, cat calls and other demonstrations followed him to the door. This was not disrespect for either Ralph or Prof. C.—it was simply studentism. It wasn't unusual; it was what always happened. There was not one but what would gladly have taken his place and been proud to have had his name singled out from the benches. Ralph, apparently unconscious of the demonstration in his honor, walked with dignity to the door, and, entering, witnessed a dramatic scene.

The noise in the amphitheatre had thoroughly alarmed the sensitive and already frightened girl. She was sobbing hysterically, while her mother was upbraiding her for what she called her "silly foolishness."

Losing her temper, she slapped the girl and started to shake her. Indignant, and with his big heart bubbling over with sympathy for the pale-featured, delicate girl, and yet maintaining perfect self-control, Ralph gently but firmly restrained the mother and spoke to the girl in a voice trembling with emotion :

"Don't be frightened, my young lady ; you are not compelled to go before the class."

Was it because Ralph was a gentleman by nature and, as such, had a natural intuition in such a scene ? Or was it the sympathy that all men feel more or less for a woman in distress ? Whatever it was—Ralph diagnosed the case at a glance. Though such a scene is rare at such a place, and this was Ralph's first experience, there were traits of character, common to both, that perhaps led Ralph to enter heart and soul into the girl's side of the case. Modesty is a jewel no less rare though it appear in the clinic. Some may call it prudery or false modesty, and yet, to the truly modest, modesty is intrinsic. A lady can no more separate herself from it than she can give up any other element that is vital to her existence. Whatever the girl's life had been, no matter how gross her surroundings, there was a gentleness of nature and a degree of refinement totally foreign to her environment. Ralph recognized this and appreciated it, too.

The scene, to him, was unique. Had it been his sister, reared in all the refinement that cultured and wealthy parents were able to throw around an only daughter, he would, perhaps, not have been sur-

prised. But such an exhibition of modesty from a girl evidently from the slums made a deep and lasting impression on his susceptible nature. Placing his hand upon her shoulder he said in a voice that was intended to carry reassurance.

"You are nervous, my child; you should go home, and I will have a physician call upon you there; you need have nothing to fear."

Who shall say what the measure of these words were to the soul of the trembling girl? They were meant to be reassuring. They were certainly all they were intended. He then placed a coin in the hand of the mother, and after inquiring their address, put them on a car and hastened back to the clinic. His report was brief—simply this:

"Doctor, she was frightened, and I could not insist on her coming in."

He quietly took his seat and his report immediately became the text of the lecture.

"Gentlemen," said Dr. C., "there is no crime in the catalogue relating to medicine so gross, so unpardonable, as that of outraged modesty. We men of medicine have won for ourselves, unjustly, the reputation of being hard-hearted and cruel. In your dealings with patients you may be rough, you may be impatient, you may at times be impolite and still hope for pardon—but never let it be said of one of my students that he has failed in his respect for the modesty of a young girl. A man who does not show proper appreciation of that priceless quality should be ostracized by upright professional men. The delicate nervous organization of a sensitive girl

needs just such a shock to make a wreck of her health. Do you comprehend what I am saying? Can you realize what an awful shock, what terrible mental anguish may be inflicted by your carelessness and lack of tact? Do you properly appreciate the fearful responsibility which rests upon you under such circumstances? Then never be guilty, under the illusion of apparent necessity, of forcing a young girl to withstand the gaze of persons foreign to her existence, while you question her upon matters of health. Such things should be shrouded in sacred privacy."

Every word of this lecture sank deep into the heart of Ralph, and so much did it appeal to him that it was with the greatest difficulty he concealed the emotion stirred within him. So much did the speaker enlarge upon the subject and so forcibly did he present it, that when he ceased speaking, the hall rang with loud and prolonged applause. Ralph left college full of thought; he had learned a valuable lesson in medicine. Somehow the experience of the morning had taken an inexplicable hold upon him—he couldn't shake off the peculiar gravity that he felt. Time after time he interrupted himself, tracing in detail every little event with its shades of circumstance. He went directly to his room, and throwing himself across the bed, thought it all over again. Wasn't it strange, he asked himself. Who would have expected it? Where did she get that air of refinement? Could it be hereditary? If so, from her mother? Ralph was forced to smile, but the smile was transient. From her mother! Per-

haps she had been so in her youth and her present condition was the result of a succession of just such shocks. Could it be from her father, a friend or a neighbor? At any rate he resolved to know more of this strange girl.

He had evidently fallen asleep, for he didn't hear Rastus, the colored houseboy, enter and approach the bed. He was awakened by Rastus, shaking him gently.

"Mr. Ralph," said the darky, "you done come in so quiet like and went to sleep, dey wuz no one knowed you wuz home, an' Miss Liza done sent me up heah to ax you if you wuz up heah."

"Well, ax me," said Ralph.

"Now, Mr. Ralph, you mustn't go pokin' fun at me. You know I wuz raised in the country and ain't had no schoolin', then, 'sides, I ain't but fo'teen yeahs ole."

"All right, Ras. I won't do so any more. But tell me, is dinner over?"

"Yes, Mr. Ralph, but Miss Liza done save you some."

"All right, Ras. Tell Liza I will be right down."

Ras scampered away to notify Miss Liza, who was cook in the establishment. "Lor', Miss Liza, dis nigger wuz scared stiff when I tiptoed in Mr. Ralph's room and saw him a-layin' across the bed so quiet like. I thought maybe he wuz done killed. The first thin' dat I thought of wuz them medicines he keeps around the room—I thought he must a-took the wrong one by mistake. Lordy, the bottles dat man do keep 'bout his room! I looked at some

of 'em t'other day and he had 'em all writ up in Latiner, I think he said."

"No, Ras, Latin," said Liza. "L-a-t-i-n. I studied Latin onct; I got as far as Amo-Amos-Amut, but Lord, Ras, dat man done talk Latin fluently. But, Ras, I wonder where Miss Amy is. She hain't had no dinner, neither."

Miss Amy and Ralph reached the dining room together.

"How do you do, Miss Lindsey," said Ralph.

"Never was happier," she replied. "Mr. Henry, I have a secret to confide to you."

"So soon?" he inquired.

"Yes," she replied. "I am going to be a trained nurse."

"Oh, is that all?"

"Yes, I have been accepted, and enter upon probation to-morrow. I am so charmed with the idea—only I have such a hard time trying to be dignified. I see the funny side of things so quickly, and if I don't conquer myself I fear it will be my undoing. Tell me, Mr. Henry, how do you be dignified?"

Ralph looked at her in astonishment. In fact, he was constantly surprised at this amiable girl. The idea that anyone didn't know how to be dignified struck him as ridiculous—and he laughed.

"Perhaps you could give me a recipe for it," said she. "I am practicing every day."

"Perhaps I could," said Ralph. "I think I could give you a prescription, and if you would only take

it down to the Dispensary, I think you would come back literally on your dignity."

"Hidden meanings again; don't you ever intend to publish a key to your jokes? I know that will be the only way I shall ever understand them."

"That is one," said he, "that I hope you may never undersand," and he dropped into his characteristic silence as an object lesson. In fact, he had too many questions on his mind; too many problems to solve to waste time in idle table talk. This attitude was always a signal to stop firing, and so Miss Amy went enthusiastically to work on her dignity, while Ralph, after swallowing a few mouthfuls, excused himself and boarded an uptown car.

CHAPTER II.

THE SETTING OF THE JEWEL.

In that part of the city of Louisville that is known as "The Point" there stands a tumble-down house, once a two-story frame in the days when flatboatmen anchored their boats under protection of the island which stands fifty yards from the shore. It was built for an inn, to accommodate transient boatmen. It had long since ceased its period of usefulness, as an inn, and was now rented out by the room to one, two or three families, according to their several needs. Sometimes its occupants were all white, sometimes all black, and sometimes mixed, black and white. Its two stories contained twelve rooms, arranged three on a side, on each floor, and opening separately into a hallway through the middle. The exterior was innocent of paint, and in many places the weather boarding had been torn off for fuel, when the weather was very cold, or the vigilance of the coal boatmen prevented them from replenishing their store. Many panes of glass had been broken out and the frames stuffed with rags in Winter, while in Summer they were draped with pink and blue mosquito netting, in sad color contrast to the gloomy surroundings. It had a decided leaning toward the river, as if it were pos-

sessed with a self-consciousness of its own degradation, and was reaching out toward the source of its former greatness, in silent anticipation of the return of the rough but honest hearts that were in those days laying foundations for fortune between Pittsburgh and New Orleans. The roof leaked, as a matter of course. Great cracks opened up in the stone chimneys built on the outside of the house. She looked like a derelict in a sea of old tin cans, brickbats and all sorts of rubbish. A sea navigated and sounded by rag-pickers with huge life-preservers strapped on their backs. Her immediate surroundings had become a public dump—a sad commentary on “dreams of things that were.” An old picket fence surrounded the house, through which great breaches had been made by the siege guns of time. A sickly peach tree was struggling for existence in the front yard—a monument to some hungry soul who had eaten all that was possible of the fruit, and then cast the stone into the dirt as worthless. The ground, bare of grass, had been beaten by pattering feet until it was as hard as a bone, and polished with a broom, took on almost a lustre. Many scenes of violence had taken place here, during the days of its degeneracy, and it had a bad reputation generally. No one would rent it unless forced to do so for want of a better place. The children were taught that it was haunted, and the girl who was living in it was shunned by other children as if she were in some way responsible for the stories they had heard. It was known in the neighborhood as the “Devil’s Shack.”

At the time our story opens, the shack contained a single family. They were supposed to use the two rear rooms on the upper floor, but there was an unwritten law which gave them full range of the house in the event no other family shared the same roof. They had consequently moved down to the front rooms on the lower floor. Locks had long since found their way to the junk shops, and the only means of fastening was by barring from the inside with anything that could be used for the purpose.

It was early in November. The day was cold. The head of the household had just come home under the influence of liquor. He was not always drunk. On off political years he was comparatively sober, but on the eve of a city election he was in a continual state of intoxication. When in such condition he was quarrelsome and abusive at home, but pleasant and considered somewhat of a wag by his associates abroad. He called to his wife a few times, but getting no response, he pulled a chair to the centre of the room and sat down, placing his feet on an old bass drum, which served as a dining table. Its rim was cut and battered in many a political burst of enthusiasm. Its one head was covered with figures, being the score of numerous games of "Seven-Up." It had gone out of commission at the last election, and Grogan had carried it home, mounted it on an old three-legged stool, and his table was complete. Once seated, with his feet up, he fell asleep. Meanwhile his wife and daughter returned. Mrs. Grogan tried to kindle a fire in the old cooking stove, for Frank was shaking violently

with a chill. Failing in this, she compelled her daughter to lie down on a miserable bed in the next room. It consisted of an old rickety stead without springs. Its mattress was stuffed with shavings from a nearby mill, and its clothing nothing more than miscellaneous dirty rags. The squeaky old bed rattled with the violence of the chill. The wind came in through the laths, where the plastering was knocked off, chilling her still more. Hearing a noise in the next room, Mrs. Grogan went to the door, but it was only the old man, who had fallen off his chair. He uttered a few oaths, but finding his new position more to his comfort, he stretched himself at full length and was soon in a drunken stupor. Mrs. Grogan went to the bedside of her daughter, and, seating herself, took the thin hand in her own horny paws. There was a spark of affection in the old soul, though her life had been such as to annihilate all the finer sensibilities that may have once existed there. Frank had stopped shaking now, and the color was fast mounting to her temples. How warm she seemed. The old lady placed both hands upon her daughter's cheek, not so much from affection but because it warmed her also. Frank seemed to be asleep now, so the old lady put on her shawl and hurried to the nearest grocery. She would invest her few cents in something that Frank could eat. She returned shortly with some condensed soup. She lighted the fire now without difficulty and warmed the food. She took it to her daughter, but Frank could not drink it. She put it back on the stove. She could have devoured it her-

self, for she was ravenously hungry. She must have something, however, to appease the anger of her husband when he should awake.

The sick girl now began to mutter incoherently, and though her mother listened anxiously to catch some sentence there was nothing at all intelligible. She bowed her head in her hands and was lost in thought. Such a scene! Such a home! Is it possible for such a family to exist and remain intact? Alas! It is only one, and there are thousands. Who knows it better than the physician, especially the one connected with one of our dispensaries. The picture is a familiar one to him. Its tone is softened rather than overdrawn.

Mrs. Grogan was asleep now. That boon is seldom denied mortals even though everything else fail. It falls alike upon the just and the unjust—note the range of its beneficence in this household: The weary, the sick and intoxicated all wrapped in its soothing remedial influence.

Suddenly Mrs. Grogan awoke. She was easily startled. She listened—everything was as quiet as the grave. She touched Frank's face—it was burning hot. She procured some water and began bathing her face and arms. She kept this up until five o'clock. She lighted an old lamp that had been rescued from the dump, and awakened her husband. He rubbed his eyes and cursed her for disturbing him. Staggering to his feet, he asked if she had any supper. This was soon prepared, so he sat down to the table and devoured the soup like a hungry wolf.

"Have you got any more?" he asked.

"No, John, that is all I have."

"Where did you get it?"

"At the grocery," was the evasive reply.

"I mean the money; where did you get the money?"

"A young man gave it to me this morning."

He looked her squarely in the eye for a moment, during which she added: "It was for carfare."

"I suppose you spent it for carfare, did you? And I walked all the way from Noodle's office. How much did he give you?"

"A quarter."

"Got any of it left?"

"Five cents."

"Give it to me."

Mary went into the next room and returned with the nickel.

"What did you go in there for?" he asked, thinking that perhaps she had more that she was concealing from him.

"I left it in there."

"I'll bet you have more. Come here."

He reached across the table and seized her by the arm.

"Indeed, I haven't any more. I spent ten cents for carfare and ten for your supper, and I only had a quarter."

"You lie! You've got more." He was hurting her arm terribly, but she dared not make an outcry. She protested that she had given him all.

"Take the bucket and get some beer."

Mrs. Grogan hesitated.

"Well, what are you a-waitin' about?" he said, angrily.

She was thinking of Frank. This rough, uncouth woman had perhaps neglected to show any tenderness for the girl, and yet she would certainly protect her from bodily harm. She was afraid to leave for she knew he would immediately begin to search for anything she might have concealed, and, finding Frank sick, she did not know what might happen.

"Where is that girl?" he said. "I'll send her."

"She is sick in bed."

"What is the matter with that brat, anyway? Did you take her to the clinic to-day? What did they say was the matter with her?"

Mrs. Grogan was in deep anxiety to know how to answer these questions. She knew that her husband's temper was ungovernable when he was drunk.

"Yes, I took her there."

"Well, what did they say?"

"They didn't say — much," she replied, hesitatingly. "They want to see her again."

"Did they give her medicine?"

"No, sir."

"Didn't she go before the class?"

Mary didn't answer. She didn't know what to say.

Grogan said nothing, but attempted to steady himself on his feet. In doing so, he leaned heavily on the edge of the table, which turned upside down and Grogan fell into it. It was some minutes before he

regained his feet. When he did so, he staggered toward the room where Frank was asleep.

Divining his intention, she hurried to the door and prepared to turn him from his purpose if possible.

He paused and said, "You didn't tell no doctor to come here, did you?"

She didn't answer, but begged him to sit down. She thought of what Ralph had said and regretted that she had failed to insist on his not coming. She saw trouble ahead, if he should come while her husband was at home.

"John, please don't go in there," she pleaded.

"I will," he shouted, at the top of his voice. "I'll teach her how to disobey me."

Mrs. Grogan had opposed her husband only a few times during their married life, and the storm that always followed taught her that there was danger in it, and it was not to be repeated except as occasion absolutely demanded. Mrs. Grogan planted herself squarely against the door and prepared for the struggle that she knew would surely come. The storm was temporarily averted, however, by a loud rap at the door.

"Come in," cried Grogan, with a voice keyed to its highest pitch, for he was trembling with passion. The burst of fury was sure to come, and it was gathering wrath with every second it was held in abeyance.

In response to the summons Ralph and Dr. Charts entered the room.

"Is this where Mr. Grogan lives?" asked Dr. Charts.

"Yes, that's me," said Grogan, sullenly.

"Well, I'm Dr. Charts, and this is——"

He didn't finish, for Grogan turned on his wife, speechless with rage. She had only time to say:

"Indeed, I didn't tell them to come," when she dropped to her knees from a blow from his powerful fist.

"Now, you get out of here. I don't need any of you here."

The noise of the fall awakened Frank, who sat up in bed and listened. The fever had subsided by this time, and she was aware that something unusual was going on. She thought she recognized Ralph's voice, and fearing some harm had come to him from her father, ran to the door and saw him in a threatening attitude over Ralph, who had stepped between this infuriated beast and his victim. She rushed to her father, and throwing both arms about his neck had time only to address him as "Father," when the frenzied man clutched her by the throat and, holding her at arm's length, attempted to strike her with his fist. His arm, however, was arrested by Dr. Charts, but the grip on the child's throat only tightened until her eyes seemed starting from their sockets and her face became livid. Realizing that something must be done instantly, Ralph aimed a well-directed blow with the toe of his heavy shoe at the wrist of the fiend. So sudden and sharp was the blow that his hand fell helpless by his side. With a cry of pain he rushed wildly around the room. Spying a knife, he seized it and rushed upon Ralph.

Dr. Charts, who seldom went into such quarters without means of protection, instantly drew his pistol and ordered him to stop. The demon in the old man was thoroughly aroused—he was blind even to his own danger, and paying no attention to the pistol made straight for Ralph, who had caught the unconscious girl in his arms and had laid her gently on the floor. The sharp report of a pistol stopped Grogan short, who sank to the floor with a bullet through the lung.

Ralph was dazed. The girl had so engaged his attention that he had failed to observe Grogan's movements for the moment.

"Ralph," said Dr. Charts, "go to the nearest telephone, call the hospital and ask that the ambulance be sent immediately. Notify the Central police station also."

Well knowing that Dr. Charts would attend to everything, Ralph was off in a flash to execute his commission. When he returned he found Grogan moaning and begging piteously for help, while Dr. Chart was coolly directing his attention toward reviving the women. The ambulance arrived first. Frank had regained consciousness and recognized Ralph as they carried her out. Before they started, Dr. Charts said to the interne in charge of the ambulance:

"Doctor, place this girl in charge of a nurse immediately and under no circumstances shall an examination be made until I reach the hospital."

"All right, sir," was the polite answer of the interne, for Dr. Charts was his staff surgeon.

asked permission to go in and see the patient, while the attendants removed Grogan from the patrol and took him to the ward. His request was readily granted, as he was well known to the officers. He returned in a few minutes to say that the women were all right.

They were taken to Central Station, where they were released on their own recognizance. As soon as they were free, Ralph attempted to make apologies to his chief for the trouble he had caused him, but he was promptly stopped by his friend, who said:

"Hush up, sir. Not a word of that. It is entirely unnecessary. If you have nothing to do to-morrow at three, come to my office. Good night, my boy. Don't let this affair give you any concern."

Left alone, Ralph was dazed by the experience on "The Point." The full force had not struck him until he was left alone. He could not sleep, so it was of no use to go to his room. He walked without paying any attention to where he was going. He noticed, however, as he passed the Custom House, that it was ten o'clock. He wondered what would happen to Grogan.

He knew his wound must be serious. If he should die, what might happen to Dr. Charts and even himself. That Dr. Charts shot to save his life was certain, and he began to doubt if he had acted toward his friend as one should under obligations for life itself. Ralph reached Central Park, entered, and found a seat, where he turned over in his mind

all the possibilities of the situation. He must have spent an hour in thought when he began to feel the cold, so he began walking again. The route this time took him by the college, where he noticed a light in the fraternity room on the fourth floor. It was Saturday night—he had forgotten about his fraternity meeting.

He decided to go up and see what the boys were doing. He had not the slightest intention of telling them what had occurred—they would all know it in the morning. Imagine the surprise of both parties when he walked into the room. He was greeted with "There he is! Who said the police had him?" "Tell us about it." "Where is Dr. Charts?" "What's up?" "Whose grave you been robbing?" and many more questions which were put to the astonished Ralph in half the time it takes to tell it. The boys crowded around him and informed him that a party had seen the patrol and had hastened to the Hall to inform the rest. Ralph saw there was nothing to do but to relate the circumstances, which he did without any coloring. The meeting broke up at a very late hour, and before the morning papers were out every medical student in the city was acquainted with the affair.

Ralph could not sleep any that night; he could only keep turning over in his mind the events of the past twenty-four hours. What a strange and adventurous turn his affairs had taken? How strange that this girl's life had come in touch with his own in this manner? What an unusual sympathy and interest she had aroused in him. He was surprised at

the interest he was taking in her. Then he began to fully realize the danger he was in and that he had innocently led his friend into.

He fully realized that Dr. Charts had saved his life. What would his parents say, and his sister, when they read his name in the paper in connection with a probable murder? This last thought thoroughly alarmed him and set him to thinking how he could best counteract the shock at home. He knew that his father would be down on the first train. He could telegraph, but he couldn't explain that way. The papers might completely exonerate him, but who can tell what the papers will say. No, he could not trust to that. He must go home as soon as he could get a train. He went noiselessly down to the telephone and called the Union Depot, learning that he could get a train for Centreville at 5 o'clock. Going back to his room, he carefully packed his suitcase to last him for several days—but then if he left on an early train he could not hear from the hospital. He hadn't thought of that. He sat down on the edge of the bed, more perplexed than ever. He couldn't collect his thoughts. Suddenly an idea struck him, and he hastened to put it into execution. Going to Rastus' room over the kitchen, he rapped, gently at first, but no response came. Fearing lest he should awaken the household, he turned the knob gently and felt the door yield to his pressure. Once in the room he lighted the gas and beheld Rastus spread all over the bed, evidently enjoying his sleep. He spoke to him, but it had no effect on the insensible Rastus. He laid his hand on his shoulder, but that

didn't do any good. Finally he shook him. Suddenly the darkey woke with a scream, sat bolt upright in bed and was about to let out another yell, when Ralph clapped his hand over his mouth and said:

"Hush up, Rastus! It's Ralph. Don't yell. I am not going to hurt you."

"Lordy, Lordy, Mr. Ralph, is dat you?" said Rastus, between gasps. "Let me feel you." He was trembling from head to foot, and his eyes appeared almost starting from their sockets. "Oh, Mr. Ralph, you don't scared me so bad. You done come in heah so quiet like. I sure thought it was a ghost. What on earth you done come in heah for this time of night? Is you sick?"

"No, Rastus, I want you to do me a favor. I have an errand for you."

"Whar to?" asked Rastus.

"To the hospital."

"What!" said the astonished Rastus. "To the City Hospital?"

"Yes."

"To-night?"

"Yes."

"Oh, Lordy, Mr. Ralph! Me go to the hospital this time of night! Nevah!"

"But, Rastus, it is very important. I am compelled to leave for home on a train in just one hour, and I must have a message from there before I leave. You must do it, Rastus. Here is a dollar to pay you for your trouble. Nothing will hurt you. I will give you a letter; all you have to do is to ring

the interest he was taking in her. Then he began to fully realize the danger he was in and that he had innocently led his friend into.

He fully realized that Dr. Charts had saved his life. What would his parents say, and his sister, when they read his name in the paper in connection with a probable murder? This last thought thoroughly alarmed him and set him to thinking how he could best counteract the shock at home. He knew that his father would be down on the first train. He could telegraph, but he couldn't explain that way. The papers might completely exonerate him, but who can tell what the papers will say. No, he could not trust to that. He must go home as soon as he could get a train. He went noiselessly down to the telephone and called the Union Depot, learning that he could get a train for Centreville at 5 o'clock. Going back to his room, he carefully packed his suitcase to last him for several days—but then if he left on an early train he could not hear from the hospital. He hadn't thought of that. He sat down on the edge of the bed, more perplexed than ever. He couldn't collect his thoughts. Suddenly an idea struck him, and he hastened to put it into execution. Going to Rastus' room over the kitchen, he rapped, gently at first, but no response came. Fearing lest he should awaken the household, he turned the knob gently and felt the door yield to his pressure. Once in the room he lighted the gas and beheld Rastus spread all over the bed, evidently enjoying his sleep. He spoke to him, but it had no effect on the insensible Rastus. He laid his hand on his shoulder, but that

didn't do any good. Finally he shook him. Suddenly the darkey woke with a scream, sat bolt upright in bed and was about to let out another yell, when Ralph clapped his hand over his mouth and said:

"Hush up, Rastus! It's Ralph. Don't yell. I am not going to hurt you."

"Lordy, Lordy, Mr. Ralph, is dat you?" said Rastus, between gasps. "Let me feel you." He was trembling from head to foot, and his eyes appeared almost starting from their sockets. "Oh, Mr. Ralph, you don't scared me so bad. You done come in heah so quiet like. I sure thought it was a ghost. What on earth you done come in heah for this time of night? Is you sick?"

"No, Rastus, I want you to do me a favor. I have an errand for you."

"Whar to?" asked Rastus.

"To the hospital."

"What!" said the astonished Rastus. "To the City Hospital?"

"Yes."

"To-night?"

"Yes."

"Oh, Lordy, Mr. Ralph! Me go to the hospital this time of night! Nevah!"

"But, Rastus, it is very important. I am compelled to leave for home on a train in just one hour, and I must have a message from there before I leave. You must do it, Rastus. Here is a dollar to pay you for your trouble. Nothing will hurt you. I will give you a letter; all you have to do is to ring

the bell, and when the night orderly answers, give him the letter and say you will wait for an answer. If you are delayed longer than half an hour, come direct to the station. I will be at home for several days, and I must have a letter before I go. Dress as quickly as you can and come to my room."

Rastus said never a word, and Ralph went to his room to write the letter. After he was gone, Rastus said aloud:

"Oh, Lordy! Go to the hospital at this time of night! I wouldn't do it for no money—if it wasn't for Mr. Ralph—he done been so good to me on so many occasions I just got to do it."

Ralph hurriedly wrote the following letter:

"Dear Field:

"You will perhaps know by the morning paper the circumstances attending the arrival of Mrs. Grogan and her daughter at the hospital, and the emergency on the other side of the house, so I need not explain further now. Please send me word as to the condition of all three patients. I am compelled to leave on a five o'clock train for home, and I am exceedingly anxious to receive word before leaving. You will find Rastus, the colored boy, waiting, with whom you can send me a note.

"Fraternally, RALPH HENRY."

Ralph sealed the letter and wrote on the envelope, "Please deliver this letter to the Interne in the female surgical, at once. (Signed.) Dr. Charts." Ralph had some compunction about signing his

friend's name, but knowing that he was the staff surgeon and that his directions would be carried out at once, he felt that there was no harm in it. He was sure the letter would be delivered at once, and so the end justified the means.

Rastus had not made his appearance, so Ralph again went to the darkey's room and found him lying across the bed, with his trousers and one shoe on, sound asleep. He aroused him and told him to hurry. Rastus was soon dressed, and depositing the letter in an inside pocket, opened the door.

"Now, Rastus, you have never failed to execute a commission faithfully. Don't disappoint me this time," said Ralph.

"Mr. Ralph," said the darkey slowly, "do you reckon they ain't any of them Fi Ki's out this time of night?"

Ralph laughed heartily, and said:

"Come on, Rastus. I'll fix that all right."

He stopped at his own room long enough to write on a scrap of paper: "The wearer bears an important message for Ralph Henry." Folding it and taking off his Phi Chi pin he fastened the note under the lapel of the darkey's coat.

"There, Rastus," said Ralph, "if you should be so unfortunate as to fall into the hands of the Phi Chi, that pin will protect you." He opened the door quietly, and a few seconds later heard Rastus go through the front gate and start whistling down the street. He then finished what packing he had to do and laid down on the bed to wait.

It was strange, he thought, that he should have

passed to his senior year with an uneventful career, and then all at once get tangled in an affair that was bound to give him unpleasant notoriety. He shrank from seeing his name in print in such a connection, as if it were a matter of eternal disgrace. He didn't know there was so much misery in the city. He had not been thrown in contact with it during his sophomore and junior years. He had witnessed his first scene in connection with the clinic. He would doubtless witness others, but this, it must be conceded, was an unusually strong one for a beginning. He wondered if it were possible to get so hardened to these scenes of misery that one would scarcely notice them. It was a matter of astonishment that a number of students should pass this pair in the waiting room of the clinic and take no notice of them. Ralph was utterly unable to answer these questions. "Perhaps," he thought, "when I get a little more experience I may be able to comprehend all of this." When he called for Dr. Charts last evening, he was surprised to see that physician place a pistol in his pocket in order to go to see a sick girl. What experience had taught him to take that precaution? Ralph was now all thankful that his friend had displayed so much forethought. He wound up this train of thought with the conclusion that he was very impressionable and very green—but he shuddered all the same at the thought of becoming callous.

Ralph Henry was warm-hearted, sympathetic, and scrupulously honest. His emotions were easily excited. A pathetic scene in fiction, a poem, or the

mere reading of an heroic action would bring the glister to his eye. He had failed utterly to read Ian Maclaren's "The Doctor's Last Journey" aloud to some friends because he became so choked with emotion. The memory of a beautiful picture, the aptness of a word expressed, lingered in his memory for years. While seated in class one day during his university course he had listened with rapt attention to his professor of philosophy, who was reading from Carlyle's "Sartor Resartus," where Diogenes characterizes his teachers as "mere dead gerund grinders." Suddenly the speaker closed the book and said: "In the farthest States, in the remotest district of that State, every teacher should be a veritable Michael Angelo." Profoundly affected, and totally oblivious to anything but the sentiment, forgetting for the moment his associates about him, he clapped his hands vigorously, to his utter confusion, for around him sat students silent as the grave, who turned to look upon him; for they interpreted it as an ignoble attempt to flatter the speaker. He saw by their uniform expression that such was their thought. The crimson mounted to his cheeks and his indignation came near overmastering him, but he quietly left the lecture room. Such was the susceptibility of this noble nature. After the lecture one of the students said loud enough for Ralph to hear:

"There goes a faculty sucker."

When Henry was finally ashamed to beat him any longer he had stamped as dangerous any attempt to banter him upon his action.

Ralph now began to think of Rastus. He must be well on his way back by this time. He consulted his watch—it had been half an hour. He hurriedly wrote a note to his landlady, intending to leave it with Rastus. He then pulled on his coat and, taking his suitcase, went down to the gate. Fifteen minutes passed, and no Rastus in sight. Thinking that he must have gone to the station, Ralph hurried along. Reaching the station, he purchased a ticket, and then looked for Rastus, but no darkey was to be found. He became uneasy; what could have happened? Had he been frightened and failed to execute his commission? Perhaps he would come yet. His train was called, and Ralph stationed himself by the gate, where he could watch the street until the last minute. "All aboard!" shouted the gatekeeper, and at the same time he heard the train bell. He darted through the gate and caught the train as it was pulling out of the station. Once seated, he began to speculate seriously on what had become of his messenger. That something unusual had occurred he was sure. He was full of forebodings of evil. He did not want Grogan to die; that would give his friend and possibly himself some trouble. After passing one or two towns a newsboy came through the train with the morning papers. He found a ready customer in Ralph, who bought copies of both the Louisville morning dailies. On the first page of one, in flaming headlines, he read: "A prominent Louisville physician in trouble. Dr. Charts shoots John Grogan through the lung. His victim thought to be dying at the hospital." Then followed an ac-

count very much as it occurred, leaving Ralph's name out; simply referring to him as a medical student. The headlines in the other were: "A tragedy on The Point. Dr. Charts, a prominent Louisville physician, accompanied by Ralph Henry, said to be a medical student, called at the house known in the neighborhood as The Devil's Shack, where they became engaged in an altercation, in which John Grogan was shot through the chest by the Doctor. The entire Grogan family, consisting of Mr. and Mrs. Grogan, and their daughter, seventeen years of age, are in the hospital."

CHAPTER IV.

RASTUS FAITHFUL.

While seated at the breakfast table that morning, the Henrys were astonished to see Ralph enter the room. His sister Bess saw him first and rushed to the door, threw her arms about his neck and kissed him over and over again. Her mother and father were right at her heels and each had their inning.

"What in the world!" "Where did you come from?" "We didn't expect you." "Come, sit down to breakfast. Doll, fix a place for Ralph." "Why, what did bring you home?"

"All that I will tell you in due time. For the present, suffice it to say that I just wanted to surprise you and get breakfast at home."

"But Ralph," said Bess, "what time did you get up to catch the train?"

"Get up? Oh, that wasn't any trouble! I was awake at the proper moment."

The breakfast passed pleasantly, Ralph choosing to allow them to finish eating before opening the subject of his experience.

"By the way," said he, as the meal was drawing to a close, "I have brought the morning papers with me, thus beating the schedule by several hours."

He first handed the paper to his mother which referred to him as a medical student. He watched her

face closely as she started to read the news aloud to the family, as was her custom. She quickly spied the headlines, and, looking up at Ralph, searched his countenance to see if she could read there any connection with the headlines. She continued reading, but when she came to the reference to the medical student, she again looked up at her son, who said, coolly:

"Mother, that's me."

With a cry she dropped the paper, and Ralph, rushing to her, caught her in his arms. She dropped her head, sobbing, on his shoulder, while his father read the article in detail, with the eager eyes of Bess following every word from over his shoulder.

"Oh, Ralph," said his mother, "you have given me such a fright."

"That is just the reason that I determined to beat the papers home in order to explain."

She threw her arms about her son's neck and wept for joy at his thoughtfulness and his safety. Mr. Henry took Ralph's hand and said:

"My son, you have been very thoughtful of us. You could not have acted more wisely."

Bess looked at her brother with eyes of admiration; how proud she was of him. The family again became seated, and Ralph related the affair over again, omitting only the personal interest he took in Frank Grogan. Bess read somewhat between the lines and divined that there was more in the story than he would confide to her alone.

"Come, Ralph," she said, as soon as the breakfast was over, "let us take a walk about the farm."

Once away from the house, she began:

"Now, tell me all about it again and describe the girl to me. How old is she? Is she pretty? Tall? Blonde or brunette?"

"Not so fast, my dear," said her brother. "How do you expect me to answer so many questions at once? In the first place, I think she is about seventeen years of age. Her hair is brown, and her eyes deep blue. She is tall and exceedingly slender. The fact is, Sis, I think she is about starved to death. If she were a little heavier, if the hollows in her cheeks were filled out, if she had some color in her face—"

"And had on a pretty dress," said Bess, "she would be beautiful. Is that what you mean?"

"Exactly."

"Wasn't it dreadful of them to want her to go before a lot of curious men and answer questions?" continued Bess, with a comical frown on her face and an emphasis on "dreadful."

"Well, it was terrible for her, but most persons who come before the clinic don't mind it."

The brother and sister continued to discuss the event until noon, during which time Ralph had answered innumerable questions as far as he was able. The information he could give, however, was very meagre and only served to stimulate her curiosity the more. When they returned to the house they were informed that their father had decided to take the noon train to Louisville. Dr. Charts' examining trial was set for the following day, and Mr. Henry felt that it was his duty to be on hand early to offer any assistance in his power. After dinner the mother retired for an afternoon nap, and Bess said:

"Come, Ralph, let us go to the library and talk about Rastus. That's such a funny name."

"He is a funny fellow," said Ralph. "He is honest and reliable, but 'scary.'"

"He doesn't seem to have been very reliable last night, brother."

"You must not judge him without a hearing. Perhaps he was not to blame."

The afternoon soon passed and many questions were discussed and many plans suggested by Bess. When it was time for supper it was definitely decided that Bess should invite Frank to come and make a long visit in the country, just as soon as she was able to leave the hospital. Ralph wouldn't have thought of that. He looked at his sister and wondered if the same influence was working on her that made him take such an interest in the girl.

"You know, Ralph," she said, "I just feel as though I loved her already."

"There it goes," he said.

"There goes what?" said Bess, looking around.

Ralph laughed heartily at his sister's mistake.

"My remarks were only intended for an aside. I was just philosophizing."

The scheme was threshed over at supper, and Mrs. Henry gave her approval with some little hesitation. She was a mother, and had a pet theory that the best way to promote well doing in her children was to protect them as far as possible from evil influence.

With a mental reservation that she would penetrate this girl's character to the bottom, she said:

"I am already half prepossessed in her favor."

"Mother," said Ralph, "it's working on you, too."

"What's that, my son?" said his mother, quickly.

"What do you mean, brother? I suppose that's another aside."

"No, Bess. What I mean is this. At the very first meeting with this girl, I was bound to her interests in an incomprehensible manner. I have thought and speculated a great deal in the past two days as to what sort of an invisible, intangible influence it was. This afternoon, when you told me that you loved her already, I wondered if that intangible something had you in its power; and now it's working on mother. If I were a Theosophist, I should say that it was her Astral body. I have about made up my mind, however, that it is the power of her innocence."

The conversation was continued in the library, going over every phase of the case. Suddenly they were interrupted by a rap at the door.

"I wonder who that can be," said Mrs. Henry. "I suppose some of the neighbors have heard you were at home, and have come to see you. It is a little late for that, too."

Bess went to the door and beheld the grinning countenance of a colored boy, who said:

"Please, Miss, is this where Mr. Ralph Henry lives?"

Ralph sprang out of his chair, crying:

"Why, Rastus, where did you come from?"

"Luibil," was the darkey's laconic reply.

Bess clapped her hands with glee. Ralph's face was aglow with interest, while Mrs. Henry's portrayed keen curiosity, mingled with alarm.

"Come up to my room, Rastus," said Ralph. "I want to talk with you."

Bess' countenance fell.

"Now, Ralph," she said, "why deprive us of the pleasure of hearing the news?"

"All right, Sis."

"Have you had any supper, Rastus?"

"No, sir, and I'se kinda hungry. I ain't had nuthin' to eat all day."

"Well, well! Come and get some supper and then we will hear the news. In the meantime, Bess, you acquaint mother with the Rastus chapter."

"All right, Ralph. Now remember, Rastus, you are to tell him nothing until you get through eating, and then we will all hear it."

"Yes'm."

Ralph could not help asking for a letter. This Rastus produced, and Ralph placed it in his pocket. After calling Doll and instructing her to get Rastus a good supper, he returned to the drawing room and read the following letter from Dr. Fields:

"Dear Ralph:—When your letter came, I was in the operating room, and was therefore delayed in answering it, but trust this will reach you in time. We will send it direct to the station Mrs. Grogan is all right except for a bruised face. Her daughter is at present delirious; temperature, 104; pulse, 108. Her throat is red from the finger marks, and will probably be much discolored for many days. She asks constantly for her father, and begs them in the same breath not to take her to the clinic. Dr. C. says her case is not serious; an aggravated form

of malaria, complicated by nervous breakdown. Mr. Grogan is in a serious condition. The bullet entered the right breast and passed through the lung. The skiagraph shows it located against the side of the spine, just under the seventh rib. Unless his condition improves no attempt will be made to remove it. His temperature at present is sub-normal, with a pulse of 130. We think his chances are exceedingly slim. He is still very much under the influence of whiskey. Yours fraternally,

"BARTON G. FIELDS."

Ralph folded the letter slowly. He was sorry to hear of the condition of Grogan, but was glad that Frank's condition promised so much. He left the room and returned with Rastus.

"Now, Rastus, take that chair and tell us what the trouble was."

Rastus made himself comfortable and began:

"Oh, Lordy, Mistah Ralph, it's a wonder this nigger's hair ain't done turned white with the 'sperience I had. You know when I left you I walked right up the middle of the street. I didn't see nuthin' 'til I got by that medical college what is at First and Chestnut streets. They wuz someone a-settin' on the steps. I shied to the udder side of the street and kept on a-whistlin' just as hard as I could to keep my courage up. Did you ever try dat, Mr. Ralph?"

Ralph shook his head.

"Pretty soon a white man over dah say, 'Whar you goin', Nigger?' and den I just done lit out an'

went. I took right up the street car track, and kept in the light. I looked back onct and them fellers wuz all out in the middle of the street a-watchin' me. Say, Mr. Ralph, don't them Fi Ki stujents ever go to bed?"

Ralph only smiled in answer.

"When I got jes' in front of the hospital I stopped to kinder reconter,—you know they is big bushes on both sides of the walk. Why don't they cut them bushes down? What's the use of making everything so dark?"

"They wish to make the ground as private as possible," said Ralph.

"They done private enough to suit me without them," said Rastus. "Well, I thought I better git up thar quick, so I took a good long breath and went up the walk fast as I could split. When I done got 'most up, oh, Lordy! I most near fainted, for dey wuz two great big Newfoundling dogs a-guardin' the grounds. I stopped just 'sif I was shot. I thought if I run they'd grab me. They bof stood pufftly still, with their heads up and a-watchin' me. I looked one of them right in the eye. It seemed to me like my heart was a-kickin' to get out. One of them wagged his tail, and I said, 'What's the matter with you, Tige?' and then t'other one growled, and every pawt of me was scared. separate. My legs jes' wouldn't stay no moh, so they turned and flew. When I reached the sidewalk I glanced over my shoulder and the biggest one was right behind me, and I see t'other one a-scootin' 'cross the yard to head me off. My knees 'gun to give way and down

I went. The big dog grabbed me by the collar and rared up on his hind feet and held me up straight. I 'member that I yelled jest wunst. When I come to, he wuz shakin' me by the collar, 'n then I looked 'round and see it was a policeman had me. I said, 'Why, you ain't no dog.'"

Here Rastus was interrupted in his narrative by the explosions of Ralph, Bess and her mother, who had been so intensely interested in the darkey's mishaps, and who were sympathizing with him so much, could not understand why the smile appeared on Ralph's countenance. When the smile broadened to a grin, their expressions were of unfeigned curiosity. Bess had not seen anything funny, and thought Ralph cruel to laugh at Rastus' bad luck, but when Rastus said that a policeman had him by the neck, Ralph burst into an uncontrollable fit of laughter. Mrs. Henry had never seen such an exhibition from her son in all his life, and she was much perplexed. It was some minutes before Ralph could explain to them that the walk into the hospital grounds had two great ornamental dogs of iron, one on either side. He then went off into another burst of merriment, in which his sister and mother joined.

"I will never forget," said Ralph, "how startled I was on a moonlight night to come unexpectedly on these iron dogs. I was pretty near as much alarmed as Rastus."

Rastus' face was as sober as a judge's. When they had controlled themselves a little, he said:

"Say, Mr. Ralph, did you say them dogs was iron?"

"Yes, Rastus, they are only ornaments."

"And they didn't growl and wag their tails and chase me, and I didn't see one of them a-runnin' across the lots?"

"No, Rastus, impossible. You were scared and imagined all of that."

"Humph!" said Rastus. He looked serious for a while, thinking it all over, while they watched his face closely. They noticed his brow knit in an effort to assist his brain to sort out the tangle. Then the muscles of his face began to work; the corners of his mouth twitched a few times; then a smile spread over his features. His thick lips parted, exposing a full set of teeth as white as snow; then the teeth separated and he said:

"'Tis funny, ain't it?"

It was some minutes before his hearers were composed enough to listen to the further recital.

"The policeman say, 'What you been doin', you black rascal? Up to some mischief, of course. I'll just lock you up 'til I find out.' 'Oh, Lordy, Mr. Pleesmens,' I said, 'don't lock me up. I ain't done nothin'.' 'Funny,' said he, 'that you would be a-runnin' out of dese grounds 'thout you'd been up to some devilment.' 'No, 'deed, I ain't done nothin'; I jest wuz goin' to take a lettah in there when two big dogs chased me out.' He looked at me a little bit, and then he say, 'Have you got the lettah?' I showed it to him and he read what was written on it, and then he said, 'Come on and I'll go with you.' So we went through de bushes and across the grounds and around de end of de building and rang

the bell, and he say to de man what answered, 'Here is a colored boy with a lettah for de interne.' I stepped inside and took a seat in the office. After I had waited a long time a young gentleman in a white duck suit come down and axed me if I wuz the boy what brung the lettah. I said, 'Yes, I wuz,' and he say, 'Well, heah's an answer, and you only have fifteen minutes to get to the train. Take it straight to the depot, and you'll have to fly.' I reckon all I needed was wings. I put de lettah in my pocket and stawted. When I got to the college, I didn't see no one, so I hurried by fast as I could. When I got to Second street, them Fi Ki's jumped out in front of me. I was pretty bad scared, but I didn't run, 'cause they wuz in the way. One of them say, 'ay, Niggah, what you doin' out this time of night?' I say, 'I ain't doin' nuthin,' and then one of 'em grabbed me and said, 'Let's take him to the 'secting room.' Oh, Lordy, I felt my knees gettin' weak again. I says, 'Please let me go.' I got to get to a train.' 'Got to catch a train, have you? Well, come on. We'll take you.' We all come down Chestnut street, until we got to Eighth, and then one of them grabbed me and the others picked me up and carried me into that medical college. I tried to yell, but one of them clapped his hand over my mouth. I kicked and fought, but they carried me in just the same as if I was a sack. They took me up stairs and into a big room, that they done lit up with 'lectric lights, and oh, Lordy, they wuz dead people all around with no cover on 'em, a-layin' on tables. They put me down on my feet, but I couldn't stand up. I

said, 'Please let me go; I'm so afraid. They all laughed. 'Fraid are you?' one of them said. 'Yes, I am,' I said, and then I thought of your skull pin and the note, and I said: 'Are you boys Fi Ki's?' and I showed them the pin. 'Oh, look at the nigger wearing a Fi Ki pin,' one of them said. 'Here's a note. Let's see what it says.' Then one of them read the note to the others, and he said, 'Oh, sonny, we were just joking; we wa'n't goin' to hut ye. We just wanted to have some fun. Run along now, and deliver your message.' 'I can't now,' I said. 'It's too late; the train has done went.' I was crying so hard that I couldn't hardly talk. They looked at one another a while, and then one of them said, 'Look here, nigger. Don't you tell the Fi Ki's this, because if you do, we'll get you sure. We'll lay for you, and it won't be no joke next time. We'll put you on one of them coolin' boards.' 'Ain't you Fi Ki's?' I said. 'No,' he said, 'and remember what I told you. Don't you breathe a word of this to the Fi Ki's.' They turned me loose, and away I went down them steps. I runned all the way to the depot, but the train wuz went. I sat down on the bench and pretty soon a man in uniform came up and said: 'What you cryin' about, sonny? Did you miss your train?' And then I told him I had a lettah for you and I was too late. I asked him what time there would be another train to Centreville, and he told me not 'til 4 o'clock in the afternoon. I asked him how much it would cost, and he said \$3, one way. I didn't have but one dollar, and so I sat there until daylight and thought how I could get some more to

bring the lettah to you and explain. The man in the uniform came up to me and said: 'Sonny, if you are in a hurry to get to Centreville, you can get a train over the L. & N., and then catch an afternoon train from Nortonville.' I went up town and tried to borrow some money, but I couldn't find anyone that had any. Finally, when I was just about discouraged, I see a man coming along with a Fi Ki pin on. I stopped him and asked him if he would give me \$2 and take your pin until you came back. I then showed him the lettah and told him all of my troubles. He gave me the money and took your pin, and said he would keep it for you. He said to tell you that it was safe and in your own school. I left Loubille at 9 o'clock this morning, and was late getting here on account of the afternoon train being late."

"Well, Rastus," said Ralph, "you have been very faithful. I will now show you where you can sleep. By the way, what did Mrs. Higgins say when I was missing this morning?"

"Lordy, Mr. Ralph, I ain't seen Mrs. Higgins. I ain't been home."

"Well, well. I see I'll have plenty of business to attend to when I return."

The household all retired now. Ralph felt the need of it.

CHAPTER V.

THE THIRD GENERATION.

The law firm of Noodles consisted of three generations of Noodles. The eldest Noodle was seventy-five and still engaged in active practice, although his attention was mainly directed to steering the affairs of his son. The firm had handled criminal law for half a century and had scored, in that time, many more victories for Noodles than for justice. The younger member of the firm had given a slight turn to the practice. Instead of following the established rule of invariably defending criminals, as his father and grandfather had done, he had a decided liking for the prosecution. He had been Assistant Deputy Prosecutor in the Police Court for three years, very much against the wishes of his grandfather, and with some damage to the established business. He seemed to have inherited the shrewdness of his ancestors, and his success thus far bade fair to balance, in his lifetime, the work of both the others. He told his father, when he received the nomination for Commonwealth Attorney that, if elected, he intended to lock up all the people that he and his grandfather had kept out of the Penitentiary and thus even up the thing for final judgment.

This young man was headstrong and obstinate. He was storm-driven by his own will. He loved his parents after a manner, or at least he would have said so if he had been questioned about it. He was ambitious but dutiful, so long as duty to parents didn't interfere with his ambitions. He was in a race to win, mainly because his grandfather opposed it. He was combative—the first expression he ever learned to use was “I won't!” The second, “You shall.” He contended on the playground, argued with his teachers and persuaded his associates to his way of thinking by mere positive assertions. Later, he debated in public; pro or con, it made little difference to him. The only way an opinion was common to himself and another was for him to have first expressed it. When in law school he looked up citations against his father's contentions in court. These he read to the old gentleman at home, much to his own gratification and his father's discomfiture. The grandfather recognized the budding ability of his grandson, and once said to his own son, “That boy will some day make you his deputy.” His grandfather was very rich; his father was rapidly becoming so, and young Victor had plenty of money with which to carry out his plans. He had taken a hand in politics. His ability along this line had been early recognized by his political superiors. He was head of the department for marketable malcontents. So ultimately was the city organized politically, that every question, after determination on the part of the supreme authority, was referred to its particular department for execution.

Young Vic, as he was called, had been largely responsible for carrying organization to infinity. He divided the people into fixed stars and planets. He recognized stars of the first and second magnitude. Each planet had one or more satellites, and all must have their solar. His ambition was to eventually become that solar. His grandfather was honest, as criminal lawyers go; so was his son, and Victor would pay a debt, but he was unscrupulous, devoid of conscience and made all things subservient to his ends. He recognized only one word his superior—accomplishment. All others were his subalterns. He had admiration for the man who succeeded—so long as he was not in competition. He hated the man who beat him and despised the man whom he conquered—and yet he was politic. Such is an insight, a mere suggestion, of the man who would in all probability win the election of Commonwealth Attorney. He knew much law. He had access to fifty years of private records in defense of criminals; he was prepared to turn surprises on all offenders who were so unfortunate as to have ever had dealings with his grandfather. Vic held it within him at once to become the best prosecutor the city had ever known, or its worst scoundrel. He had not yet decided which course to pursue.

On the morning after the occurrence at the Devil's Shack, he paid a visit to the Commonwealth Attorney's residence and requested an interview. It was immediately granted.

"Well, Noodles, what can I do for you?" asked that functionary.

"I want to ask a personal favor of you."

"Well, sir, explain yourself, and if it is within my power I will certainly grant it."

"You have," said Vic, "only two weeks more to serve as prosecutor. To-morrow morning the case against Dr. Charts will be called in the Police Court."

"Yes, that is true," said the attorney, "and from what I know of the case from the newspapers he will be acquitted at the preliminary examination."

"Is he a personal friend of yours?" asked Vic.

"No," replied the attorney; "I have only a slight acquaintance with him, still I know him to be an honorable fellow. Why do you question me in this regard?"

"That brings me to my request. I don't know who his attorneys are, but they will, perhaps, expect a trial to-morrow. They probably think there is nothing in the case. Now what I want is a continuance."

"A continuance! What for?" asked the surprised official.

"Well, it would be a good case for me to begin on," was the rejoinder.

"You seem certain of your election."

"Certainly."

"What have you against Dr. Charts? There is nothing in his case."

"Nothing against him personally," said Vic, "and because there is nothing to prosecute him for is the very reason I want to prosecute him. If you can

secure a continuance, it will in all probability throw the case on the docket in such a manner that it will be my first, and I expect to establish a reputation on it."

"Well, Vic, do you really wish me to ask for a continuance?"

"Yes."

"Very well, I will do so, but if I were in your place I would want a case where there was some guilt and a chance to secure a verdict."

Vic said nothing in reply, but thanked him and withdrew.

After he had retired, the attorney pondered a long time over the occurrence. He began to wonder what was in young Vic Noodles' head.

Upon leaving the Commonwealth Attorney's residence, Vic went direct to the hospital and asked to see Grogan. He was immediately conducted to the ward, where he met the interne, who led the way to the bedside. Vic noted the anxious expression, and, taking the interne by the arm, led the way to the other end of the room.

"He seems to be in a very serious condition," said Vic.

"His condition is very grave, indeed."

"Doctor, will he be permitted to talk?"

"Yes, especially if it is important, for it will likely be his only chance."

"How long do you think he will live?"

"He may linger several days or drop off at any time."

Noodles walked to the window and gazed out on

the grounds for some time, as if in deep thought. Turning to the interne, he said:

"You have charge of this patient, have you?"

"No, I am in the female surgical ward and am answering for Dr. Pratt, who is at home to-day."

"When will Dr. Pratt return?"

"To-morrow."

"Who is the staff surgeon?"

"Dr. Blades."

Noodles scowled, and asked if Grogan had been unconscious at any time.

"No, sir."

"Has he made any statement about the shooting?"

"None whatever, sir. The staff has not been here to-day."

"Do you have private rooms here?"

"Yes, sir, at \$12 per week."

"Too much money for him," said Noodles, reflectively.

"Goodby, Grogan. I'll come to see you again."

At the same time he said in a voice just loud enough for Grogan to hear:

"Don't talk to a soul until I see you."

He thanked the doctor and left the hospital. Vic Noodles made straight for The Point in an automobile, where he stopped in front of a saloon, and entering, ordered a drink. He then passed out of the rear door, crossed lots rapidly until he came to the rear of a house facing the other side of the block. He entered without knocking and encountered an old woman in the kitchen.

"Good day, Auntie. Is Kittie here?"

"Yes, Mr. Noodles. I'll call her."

"Never mind, Auntie. I'll call her. Where is she?"

"Upstairs."

Vic rapidly ascended the steps and knocked at the door.

"Come in," was the answer from within.

Vic walked in, very much to the surprise of the girl.

"Why, what brings you here, Mr. Noodles?"

Ignoring her question, he said:

"Working now?"

"No, sir, I haven't a place."

"Put on your hat and be down at the railroad crossing in ten minutes. I want you to take a ride with me. I will bring you back in half an hour."

"In the auto?" she inquired.

"Yes, in the auto."

He didn't wait to hear her expression of delight, but hurrying downstairs, said to her mother.

"Kittie is going on a little errand for me and will be gone about half an hour."

He then passed out, leaped the fence, came in at the rear of the saloon, took up his glass, which was waiting on the bar, drank, passed a few remarks to the barkeeper, and observed the loafers. He passed a coin to the bartender and whispered:

"After I am gone, call the fellows up to have a drink."

He stepped in his machine and sped toward Main street, stopping at the crossing to pick up Kittie.

"Kittie," said Noodles, "do you think you could play trained nurse?"

"Play trained nurse? What an idea! Me a trained nurse! I wish I was. Perhaps I wouldn't have such a hard time to make a living for mother and I."

"You must play the nurse for me; I don't know for how long."

"Where?"

"At the hospital. Can you sew?"

"Yes, indeed."

"Well, we are going to get some material, and you are to make yourself two uniforms just as rapidly as your fingers will permit. The very moment they are finished you are to telephone me, and I will come for you."

"Well, this is a new role for me," said Kittie, laughing. "I know how to take temperature all right, and I have made more than one nurse's uniform. I'll do my level best, Mr. Noodles. You know I am deeply grateful to you. I'll take just as good care of your patient as I possibly can."

"That's not the point," said Vic. "If he is going to get well, what is the use of all this?"

"Oh, then, you don't want him to get well?" said Kittie, in great astonishment.

"No, not that exactly. It is a matter of indifference to me, so far as he is personally concerned, but the physicians at the hospital say he cannot get well, and so long as he is bound to die, I want to have the advantage of it. You know I expect to be elected Prosecutor, and crime must not go unpun-

ished. You needn't worry about your part. You are only the nurse, and Dr. Potts will have charge of the case. He will understand."

Vic pulled up in front of a little store on the river road, and gave Kittie a bill. She soon returned with the necessary material, and in twenty minutes was at the railroad crossing again.

Dr. Potts' office was located on The Point, facing the river. Its one room contained, as furniture, a single chair, a rickety table, a few out-of-date medical books and periodicals, a few bottles of drugs and an old stove set on brickbats. The doctor was 47 years of age. He had been a licensed physician for seventeen years. He had not made a success, and perhaps the only reason he did not give up the profession was because his lack of education would have compelled him to do manual labor to earn a livelihood. He had moved from one location to another in the city, and always among the poorer classes. He had tried it in the country for a while, but an unfortunate result from treating a fracture had driven him to the city again. He at last found his level on Fulton street, where he succeeded in earning a very meagre living at much reduced rates. The doctor's early education had been sadly neglected, and yet he had a license to practice—granted seventeen years before and never questioned since. He was explaining to a "patient" on the morning in question the virtues of his favorite fever medicine. He held a bottle of it up to the light, and looking over his nose glasses.

"Friend," said he, "that's the best fever medicine

in the world. It is made of roots and herbs and things. It brings the strengthening powers to the surface and gives an ardor to the backbone."

He had just finished this speech, and stood admiring the product of his own creative genius, when the door opened and in stepped Mr. Vic Noodles.

"Good morning, Doctor. Busy?"

"Just at present, Mr. Noodles, but I will be at leisure in a few minutes."

"All right, Doctor," said Noodles. "I wish to see you just as soon as possible. I have a patient for you."

He then stepped outside; as the front yard was used for a reception room, Winter and Summer. In a few minutes the patient departed, and Mr. Noodles entered. He began, without preliminaries; in fact, time was exceedingly valuable to Mr. Noodles.

"You are perhaps aware," began Vic, "that John Grogan was shot last night."

"Yes, I just heard of it a while ago. In fact, the last patient told me."

"Yes, he is shot, and in the hospital. Here is \$15. I want you to go to the hospital at once and ask to see the Superintendent. Tell him a few of Grogan's friends have made up a purse for him and that they have employed you to take charge of his case. Pay \$12 for his first week's board, and have him transferred immediately to a private room. I want you to stay with him until you hear from me. Now, not a word to anyone. You don't know me. Understand?"

"Yes, sir."

"My machine is here, and I will take you a part of the way. I want you to get charge of this man before the staff surgeon has a chance to question him. If you think he is serious before I come to the hospital, call me up. Now, don't forget anything I have told you."

When they reached the hospital, Potts passed directly through the grounds and hurried to Market street, where he purchased a suit of second-hand clothes, suit and hat, going in debt on the strength of his case, and paying \$3 down. Instead of going directly to the hospital now, he proceeded to the German Security Bank. He introduced himself as Dr. Theodore Potts and asked to open an account with them. The president introduced him to the cashier, who made out a deposit book for him, and was surprised to find the initial deposit only \$12. He said nothing, however, but gave him a book of blank checks. Dr. Potts now hurried to the hospital and asked for the Superintendent. He was informed by the registrar that the Superintendent was at the office of the Board of Safety.

"Call him up, if you please, sir, and say that Dr. Potts, Dr. Theodore Potts, wishes to speak to him at once."

"Is it anything that I can attend to?" politely inquired the official.

"I don't know," he said. "I have been engaged by the neighbors of Mr. Grogan to take charge of his case and to give him all the advantage that medical talent affords."

"Well, but you will not be permitted to take

charge of his case. That must be attended to by the regular staff," replied the Registrar.

"Why not, when I am a reputable physician?"

"Well, it is the rule of the institution. If you want to make him a private patient," he continued, "that is different. That would cost you twelve dollars a week."

"Well, then," said the doctor, "I will advance a check for the week." Seating himself at the desk, he, after much labor and adjusting of spectacles, succeeded in writing the following :

To the German Security Bank:

Pay to the order of the clerk of the City Hospital, and charge same to the bank account of Dr. Theodore Potts."

The Registrar smiled and said:

"Doctor, you had better let me write that for you."

When the check was properly made out and signed, the registrar rang for the Superintendent of nurses, to whom he introduced Dr. Potts.

"Nurse," said he, "have Mr. Grogan transferred at once to a private room. I have just given the young man here a check for the necessary amount."

The Superintendent bowed and withdrew. Dr. Potts was shown to the ward, while the registrar called up the bank to see if the check was good.

Mr. Brown, the cashier, who was a good judge of human nature, observed to Mr. White, the book-keeper, after relating the circumstance :

"You may as well close that account."

Dr. Potts' Prince Albert, a trifle short, was the cause of much merriment among the nurses as he walked with dignity through the ward. He had a habit of dividing his long beard into halves, which he stroked alternately, much to the amusement of the patients.

Espying Grogan, whom he knew, he walked directly to his bed, saying:

"My dear Mr. Grogan, I've got you now."

Grogan looked at him inquisitively, and said:

"Where is Mary? I want to tell her good-by."

The irony was lost on Potts, who said, holding up one finger:

"You must not excite yourself." The nurses were all very busy now. Each was intent upon doing something; it mattered not what, so they could keep from laughing.

"A good half day's work," said Vic Noodles, "I guess I'm entitled to a good dinner. I can collect my thoughts and lay my plans. Affairs will rest until old Potts gets thirsty, and then I'll have to relieve the tension, else my scheme may part her cables. If I can just get Kittie in command of my affairs, I won't worry over anything at that end of the line. She will keep old Potts from killing the patient before I am through with him." (

Noodles soon had his plans completed. To a man of his quick conception it is very easy to anticipate events and to lay schemes to counteract them. First he must instruct Grogan as to what he must say, but he must have Kittie there in order to get rid of Potts

while he talked with Grogan. Then he must have a reputable surgeon called in consultation, and an ante-mortem statement made in his presence as a witness, in order to give value to the testimony. No jury on earth would believe Potts. Ralph Henry must be located and arrested.

"I must have him indicted in order to discredit his testimony. That leaves two witnesses to the affair. I'll have to sound them before I can plan anything further. Vic, you will be busy for the next month."

After lunch he went direct to the Attorney's residence, and reported to his chief that Grogan was in a serious condition and that his death was expected.

"He is still conscious, however, and wants to make a statement about the affair."

"You are the Assistant Attorney," said Mr. Reeder; "suppose you take his statement."

"Very well, sir, I should like very much, indeed, to have it." Vic immediately went to his office, and, as he entered, saw Dr. Charts leaving his grandfather's consultation room. Vic was very much surprised. Could it be possible that the firm of Noodles were to defend Dr. Charts? He was positive that the prosecution would come from there, but it would certainly be odd if his grandfather were to undertake the defense.

"I must prevent that in some way," thought Vic. "He must not know anything about my plans, however, for if he knew I was going to make an effort toward conviction, while he might perhaps laud my

ambition, were he to enter the case against me I fear I would waste my energies."

"Vic," said the senior member of the firm, as he entered, "Dr. Charts has applied for counsel."

Vic concealed his anxiety, which was indeed very great. He merely nodded his head and sat down—well knowing his grandfather would tell him the result of the conference.

"I told him we would defend him. His examining trial comes up to-morrow and he will be acquitted—a mere matter of form. Your father will appear for him as I will be out of the city."

It was a relief to Vic to learn that his father and not his grandfather would appear.

"You will so inform Mr. Reeder so that you may not appear for the prosecution. It would not look well. I am going home now and will leave the city at 4 o'clock. Tell your father there is a letter on my desk for him with instructions."

After the old gentleman had gone, Vic took an easy chair and began to ponder over the curious turn affairs had taken. He was still turning them over and planning when his father entered, two hours later.

"Father," said Vic, "we've been engaged in Dr. Charts' case. There is a letter on grandfather's desk for you. By the way, have you or grandfather ever defended Dr. Charts in any case?"

"Yes, said his father, "we defended him in a mal-practice suit in the first year of his practice. It was nothing but a blackmailing scheme but the plaintiff put up a hard fight."

The telephone rang and Vic answered. It was Kittie who had finished one uniform and was ready to go "on duty," suggesting that perhaps she might not need the other one.

"Get everything ready ; go immediately to the hospital and ask for the superintendent of nurses. Tell her that you have been employed by Dr. Potts to nurse Mr. Grogan. Don't lose any time. Goodbye."

"Now I can proceed," said Vic, and he immediately departed for the hospital, where he was shown to Grogan's room. He found Potts sitting by the bed. As he entered, the doctor arose and said :

"Mr. Noodles, our patient, I fear, is going to die. I once saw a man shot just as he is and he died very promptly. Grogan hasn't any chance to get well. I have been trying to impress upon him the seriousness of his case."

"I think that you have succeeded," said Vic, as he glanced at the pale, anxious face of the patient.

"Has anyone seen him?"

"No one, sir. His wife and daughter have both been here but I would not permit them to come in."

"That was right. You think, doctor, that his case is hopeless?" whispered Vic.

"Yes, sir ; he has no chance to get well."

"Very well, go to the phone and call Dr. Emerson. Tell him that you want him in consultation at once."

When Vic was alone with Grogan, he closed the door carefully.

"Now, Grogan," he began, "I want you to do

me a very great favor. We have been friends for a long time and I have done a great many things for you. As you know, I will be elected prosecutor and it will become my duty to prosecute your murderers. I want you to make a statement for me after the doctors get through with their examination. I must know beforehand though what the statement will be. This will be a great favor and the last you will ever be able to grant me. I have written out just what I want you to say and will read it to you."

After the reading Grogan was silent.

"You know," continued Vic, "that Mrs. Grogan and Frank will need some one to look after them. Do this for me and I will place a sum of money in their hands that will keep them from want."

Grogan took the paper, and, after reading it over carefully, reached out his trembling hand and said:

"Will you swear to look after Mary and the girl?"

"I give you my word of honor," said Vic, as he took the hand.

"Very well; I will do as you wish," responded Grogan. Let us go over it again that I may understand it thoroughly."

Dr. Potts now returned to say that Dr. Emerson would be up immediately. Vic then went to the phone and, calling his stenographer, requested her to come to the hospital at once. Kitty had arrived and was shown to the room by the superinendent of nurses.

As soon as Dr. Emerson arrived, he was met by Dr. Potts who insisted on detailing a history of the

case to him. After the doctors had completed the examination and had retired to discuss the case, Vic admonished the patient to say nothing but just what was to be contained in the statement and to tell it in his own language. Vic then waited in the hall for the conference to end.

When Dr. Emerson appeared, Vic asked for an opinion.

"He is sinking slowly to the end. Nothing can be done for him."

"Is his mind clear, and, in your opinion, is he capable of making an ante-mortem statement?"

"Certainly, if it is not delayed too long. His mind now is perfectly clear."

"I am prepared to take it at once and I would like for you to witness it. My stenographer will be here in a few minutes."

"Very well," said the doctor.

When everything was ready, Grogan made the statement, which was properly signed, witnessed and attested. Mr. Noodles and the doctor then left with the stenographer, leaving Dr. Potts and Kittie in the field.

The patient was breathing with great difficulty. The effort of talking had exhausted him to a marked degree. Kittie sat by the bed and took his hands; they were icy cold and she was very much distressed. His pinched and anxious countenance, staring eyes, together with his labored breathing, was almost too much for her. She propped him up in bed and found that it relieved him somewhat. He coughed

a few times and got up a clot of blood, which was thrown by a forced expiration upon Kittie's uniform. She shuddered and wished she was at home but the idea of abandoning the case never entered the head of this brave girl." "Doctor, is there anything you can do to relieve him?"

"No; that is perfectly natural. You mustn't mind a little thing like that. He is bleeding into his own lungs and nothing will stop it."

The doctor felt his pulse and said:

"Bad. Count it, nurse."

Kittie placed her finger on the pulse; she had learned that in nursing her mother, and felt only a flutter; she couldn't have counted it if she had been provided with a watch. Grogan coughed violently and succeeded in clearing the lungs, for he seemed to be easier. He then asked for Mary and Frank.

"Where are they?"

"They are here in the hospital," said Kittie.

"I want to see them."

"Impossible," said Dr. Potts. "It would excite you and only make you worse."

"But, doctor," said Kittie, "he cannot get well, anyway. He understands that, and it is awful not to let them in."

"I must be the judge of that, nurse."

There came a rap at the door, which Kittie answered, and found a tall, pale-faced girl, who asked if she might see her father. Kittie stepped out into the hall, and Frank said:

"Please let me see my father. You're the nurse, are you not? How is he? Is he serious?"

"My dear girl," said Kittie. "He is very serious. The doctor thinks he cannot recover, and he has asked for you."

"Oh, let me see him," sobbed Frank.

It was a terrible experience for Kittie, unused as she was to such scenes. She put her arm around Frank, and said:

"I would gladly let you see him if I dared, but the doctor forbids, and I am only the nurse. I will send you word how he gets along."

Kittie re-entered the room, her eyes filled with tears, and found Dr. Potts examining the patient.

"He is better, now," he said. "I think I will go. If he goes to sleep, don't awaken him for his medicine."

Kittie was left alone with the patient, and it was rapidly growing dark. She now began to take notice of her surroundings. The room was very small, and opened on either side into a ward that was filled with surgical cases. The furniture consisted of a single iron bed, a small table and two chairs. It had one large window, which overlooked the ambulance drive. Its walls were bare and dingy from steam. This was all, and yet there was nothing wanting. Bare necessity presided where luxury was unknown. At night it was lighted with a single incandescent suspended from the ceiling with its cord, without fixtures and without shade. This was only lighted for dressings. At other times, a single candle furnished the light. As Kittie sat there in the candle-light,

she grew exceedingly nervous; it was decidedly an undesirable experience. Bad enough for one accustomed to it, but to a girl of twenty, and in a large hospital for the first time, under grave responsibility and alone with a dying man, it was enough to frighten her. She shaded the candle from the eyes of her patient and sat down to her long vigil. Presently she heard the faint footsteps of the night superintendent, who knocked gently at her door, and entered.

"How is your patient, Miss Lowry?" she asked.

"Resting very easy at present," said Kittie.

The superintendent examined the condition of the pulse, and said:

"When he awakens he will probably have another paroxysm of coughing and may have some hemorrhage. If you need any assistance, call on the night nurse in the emergency next to you."

Grogan soon began to breathe heavily again. He opened his eyes and called for water. Kittie raised his head and placed the cup to his lips. He drank greedily and complained of being cold.

She covered him with blankets, with which the hospital was well supplied. His cough now became troublesome and Kittie became so uneasy that she could scarcely control herself, and so decided to leave the room for a few minutes and talk to the night nurse. She was never so lonesome in her life. She stepped quietly into the next room, where the nurse was seated at the table, working on her charts. As soon as she saw Kittie she arose, spoke pleasantly to her, and offered her a chair.

"I want to ask some advice," said Kittie. "You know the wife and daughter of my patient are in the hospital; they are very anxious to see him and he has asked to see them, but Dr. Potts has forbidden it. It is awfully hard. I promised to send word to his daughter, and oh, how I wish they could see him, for I know he cannot get well."

The nurse went with her to Grogan's room, and after examining him, said:

"Come; your patient is easy; we will go to the female surgical."

After getting permission of the night superintendent to visit the female surgical, she led the way through a long hall. Snow-white beds were placed in a row, with their heads next to the wall, leaving room for the nurses and doctors to pass between the foot and the other wall. They soon entered a larger room dimly lighted with a gas jet at either end. Thirty beds of uniform size and height were arranged in two rows, with an aisle down the centre. The beds were as white as snow, and each had its sufferer; some were sleeping and others were tossing about and giving vent to their sufferings with groans. The beds were placed about three feet apart. At one end of the room a door was open, through which they could see into the surgical dressing room. It was brilliantly lighted, and Kittie saw a beautiful girl on the table, while the internes and nurses were dressing a jagged wound in the breast.

"What are they doing in there?" asked Kittie.

"Just an 'emergency,'" answered the nurse.

They soon came to the beds of Mrs. Grogan and

Frank. The former was fast asleep. The comfortable bed, the warmth of the building and the wholesome food were such as to induce sleep to a person of her callosity. Frank was lying on her face, sobbing as if her heart would break. In the next bed was a patient, who said, as they passed:

"I wish, nurse, you would make that thing shut up and let us go to sleep. She has been bawling all night."

Frank raised in bed; her hair was loose and hanging down her back; she stared wildly about her, and immediately asked how her father was.

"Do you want to see your father?" asked Kittie.

Frank sprang out of bed and hurriedly slipped on a calico wrapper that was provided by the hospital, and which came halfway from the knees to the ankles. She silently followed the nurse back to her father's room.

"You must promise me to be very quiet and not to disturb him, and I cannot permit you to stay long."

Frank promised, and was led quietly to her father's bed. She silently placed her arms about his neck and kissed his forehead, then laid her cheek against his, and the tears flowed softly. The nurse was indifferent to the scene, but Kittie was forced to turn her head.

"May I speak to him, nurse?" asked Frank.

"Yes," answered Kittie, "if you will control yourself."

Frank gently awakened her father, who, as soon as he saw her, said:

"Where is Mary?"

"She is in bed, father," she replied.

"Taking it easy, while I am dying," said he.

"No, no! She wanted to see you, but they would not let her."

"Tell her, Frank, that I didn't mean no harm to her. Do you know who those doctors were who came to my house?"

"Yes, father."

"Well, just remember that you was the cause of their coming there, and remember that they murdered your father."

Frank sank to her knees and the nurses carried her, senseless, to an adjoining room, where they placed her in bed. Kittie hurried back and found Grogan sitting up in bed, much excited, coughing violently and clutching at his throat. She felt something warm trickling on her neck, and glancing, saw the blood pouring from his mouth and running on her uniform. She screamed, and dropping Grogan, rushed out of the room. The nurse from the emergency came running to her, directed her to the bathroom, and then hastened to Grogan. The bed was saturated with blood and Grogan was dead.

CHAPTER VI.

THE STUDENT'S FRIEND.

Mrs. Higgins was the soul of curiosity. She had lost a boarder and a house boy at the same time, and it told visibly on the barometer. Her table was the barometer, sensitive to the slightest change in the atmosphere of her existence. When an unusual dish made its apparance, the boarders instinctively looked for a new face, and vice versa, and so they were made aware of the loss of Ralph at dinner. It was even more marked since she had not learned the news in time to retrench herself for breakfast, but suffered the loss of the food prepared for him at that meal. Mrs. Higgins was tall and spare; her lips and nose were translucent and her hair was red. Her shape was that of a parallelogram, surmounted by a prolate spheroid and balanced on two cylinders. Her husband was an insurance agent, and provided only a part of the living. Her mother and father, two sisters and a brother-in-law lived with her; consequently she was obliged to keep boarders to earn enough to feed her dependencies. No wonder she was thin. At dinner, she presided at the head of the boarders' table, while the rest of the family had a table to themselves in the adjoining room. She was economical in the extreme, yet she always had

the sympathy of her boarders. Who wouldn't have accorded her sympathy? She actually seemed to extract it. She was thin—that she couldn't help. She was not handsome; that she didn't try to remedy. She was of a gentle, forgiving disposition, and was even self-sacrificing in some things. She sometimes gave her boarders short rations, yet she didn't dress on the profits. She never purchased anything for herself except when the barometer so indicated the wisdom of the expenditure. She had aristocratic airs; one thing she never economized in—she always kept a servant to answer the doorbell, no matter if she was short on food—the appearance must be kept up. She had two children, a son and a daughter, the one sixteen, the other twelve. The former was in a military institute, where she delighted to see him in uniform; the girl was in a private boarding school; both should have been in the public schools, but such were the ideas of this good woman in regard to education.

On the day following the tragedy on The Point, Mrs. Higgins took her accustomed place at the table and rang the bell. The doors of the dining-room burst asunder like a storm-carried battlement. The boarders poured in and took the table by assault. The boarders were chiefly medical students, although there were a few "Theologs."

"I don't like to board theological students," she remarked to a neighbor one day. "They never have any money."

Preliminaries were dispensed with at the table. The students all fell to work with a will. On this par-

ticular occasion the subject of conversation was entirely upon Ralph and Prof. Charts.

"Are you going to the examining trial, George?"

"When is it?" he inquired.

"To-morrow, at 10 o'clock."

"Sure!" said several at once. "We will adjourn school. Every student in the city will be there," said another one.

"What's become of Ralph, Mrs. Higgins?"

Mrs. Higgins would have given anything to know, but she didn't expose her ignorance on the subject. She simply smiled and kept silent, from which they judged that she knew all about it.

"What do you think of Dr. Charts?"

"I didn't think he would do it."

"You didn't?"

"Why, it's just what I expected," said a third. "He is the nerviest man in town."

"It would certainly have been all up with Ralph Henry if it had not been for Dr. Charts."

"I would like to be on the jury. I would certainly turn him loose in a hurry."

"I understand," said another, "that Grogan was a bad man."

"Is he dead yet?" asked Mrs. Higgins.

"I don't know," said still another. "Say, Sam, have you heard how Grogan is?"

"If he dies, it may make a difference in Dr. Charts' case," said Sam, who was the wiseacre of the crowd. "It may give him some trouble. I am glad I am not in his shoes. He will have to plead self defense when it was not a case of self-defense."

"Pooh," said Jimmie Whitson, "don't you worry over Charts. He will get out of that all right."

Although the conversation was not interrupted for a moment, the eating was not neglected, either. They all finished at the same time, and arose almost as a man. One minute after the meal ended the dining room was clear and perfect quiet abided where tumult reigned before.

CHAPTER VII.

A GLIMPSE OF THE GROTESQUE.

Ralph had been up all Saturday night, and the fatigue, with the excitement added, caused him to sleep soundly. He awoke early, however, and soon decided that he should return to Louisville by an early train, in order to be present at the examining trial. Although no charge had been entered against him, he suddenly realized that he would be a most valuable witness for Dr. Charts. He soon announced his determination, and it was agreed by his mother and sister that he had decided wisely. Mrs. Henry and Bess were always sure that it was entirely the proper thing to do whenever Ralph proposed anything. He had some difficulty in arousing Rastus, who had fulfilled his commission, and having nothing on his mind was as sound asleep as it was possible for any mortal to be and still be alive. He finally succeeded in making the darkey realize that they were going back to the city. On the train Ralph secured copies of the morning papers, and learned that Grogan was dead. He learned also that Dr. Charts' trial was set for 10 o'clock. He would have just time to reach the court room before the case was called. As soon as they were in the station, Ralph told Rastus to go to the

boarding house with his grip and wait there until he arrived. He then hurried to the court room, where he found Dr. Charts seated, with his attorneys, inside the rail, while the space back to the doors and even the windows themselves were filled with students. As he entered Dr. Charts whispered something to Mr. Noodles, his attorney, and beckoned Ralph to come to him. Mr. Noodles said something to the Court Bailiff, who made a passageway for Ralph, who entered and was given a seat next to Dr. Charts. One or two minor cases were disposed of, before his case was called. When the judge finally read from the docket:

“The Commonwealth of Kentucky vs.
Dr. Charts; shooting and wounding.”

Mr. Reeder, the prosecutor, arose and said:

“Judge, Your Honor, the prosecution in this case would like to ask a continuance. We have not had time to investigate any of the facts in the case, and have had no opportunity to prepare. I am fully aware that there is more in this case than appears upon the surface, and as Mr. Grogan, the victim of Dr. Charts’ pistol, is dead, I ask that the charge be amended to murder, and that a warrant be issued at once for Mr. Ralph Henry, who was with the Doctor at the time of the shooting.”

Vic Noodles sat close to the rail, where chairs are provided for lawyers, press agents and other privileged spectators, and intently studied Ralph’s countenance. There was no objection on the part of Mr.

Noodles, counsel for the defense, so the petition was granted, and the case docketed for the 15th of January. The students were all disappointed. Ralph was amazed at the proceedings; he was thunder-struck when he heard that the prosecutor had asked that the charge be amended to murder and that he was to be arrested. Nobody seemed to understand just why Mr. James Noodles had acquiesced without a struggle. Dr. Charts was sorely disappointed; he was confident he would have been exonerated upon an examining trial, and he probably would have been if the trial had proceeded. The judge thought it a little strange that the motion was not argued by the defense. It was so unusual where Noodles appeared as counsel. Even Mr. Reeder was surprised but not mystified, for he glanced first at the elder and then the younger Noodles and received a smile of satisfaction from the latter. Vic was satisfied for the present; he had scored one in his first move. Ralph surrendered himself to an officer, and a charge of accessory to the fact was made out against him. They were taken to police headquarters, accompanied by Mr. Henry and James Noodles, where they were detained until bond was furnished. Dr. Charts then insisted on Ralph and Mr. Henry going home with him for lunch. The Doctor's wife was waiting for them at the door. She gave evidence of intense mental suffering. Somehow she feared all would not turn out well, and all his assurance could not quite satisfy her. Her look of inquiry was promptly answered by Dr. Charts, who said:

"Margaret, the trial is postponed."

Her face clouded and she turned to conceal a tear.

"It will all come out right," he said, reassuringly. "Grogan's death made it necessary for a postponement."

That was the explanation he had received from Mr. Noodles. Mrs. Charts had often met Ralph; in fact, he was quite at home at their house, but it was the first opportunity of Mr. Henry to meet any of Ralph's friends, other than one or two classmates that he had brought home with him during vacation.

The meal dragged; no one was in the spirit to enliven it. Mrs. Charts, though she did her best to bear up and appear outwardly calm, was nearly sick with fear. She had dreadful forebodings of evil, that, do what she might, she could not shake off. Mr. Henry was heavy-hearted as a matter of course. Ralph was not so much worried just at present over the legal aspect of the case as he was curious to know how affairs were going at the hospital. He wanted to see Fields and hear what had transpired in his absence. He would like to see Frank also, and perhaps give her some word of encouragement. but of more interest still to lay before her the plan of the visit to his home. He had promised Bess to write her all the particulars of the arrangements just as soon as they could be made. The Doctor gave visible signs of worry, and as soon as Ralph could do so, he begged to be excused from the company to go to his boarding house, as he explained

to them. He noticed a faint smile on the countenance of the Doctor, who saw the lameness of the excuse. Ralph smiled; he couldn't help it. Then the smile on the Doctor's face broadened to a grin. It was irresistible. Ralph blushed and grinned also. Mrs. Charts noticed the pantomime and could not prevent a smile from spreading over her features, though for the life of her she couldn't tell why—there was so little cause for it. Then Mr. Henry caught it, and they all smiled. The scene was grotesque in the highest degree. It grew upon all of them to such an extent that Dr. Charts burst into a loud laugh, followed by his wife and Mr. Henry, while Ralph fled in confusion. Mrs. Charts continued to laugh; she could not stop. Her breath came in short jerks, and she was utterly unable to control herself until the Doctor was compelled to assist her into an adjoining room, where she had a violent paroxysm of hysterics. Ralph went direct to the hospital, where he sought Fields and heard all that had occurred at the hospital. He learned that Grogan had been made a private patient and had a special nurse, while his wife and daughter were left to the cold charities of the ward. Ralph shuddered at the recital of Grogan's death. Fields had learned all the particulars from the night nurse.

"I don't understand," said he, "why young Noodles took such an interest in his case. He came here and inquired if they had private rooms, and then came back two or three times to see him."

"Oh, I can explain that," said Ralph. "The firm of Noodles are the attorneys for Dr. Charts, and he

was undoubtedly getting evidence in behalf of his client."

"Oh, is that it?" said Barton. "Well, that explains it. That must be the reason he was placed in a private room. Dr. Charts has certainly applied to the right firm to get him out of trouble. No matter what you do, all it takes is a little money and Noodles to defend you and all ends well."

Ralph related what had occurred at the court in the morning, much to the surprise of Barton, who didn't attempt to offer any consolatory remarks. He knew Ralph too well for that.

"There is only one consolation," Ralph had often said to him, "the consolation of a clear conscience. It must come from within, and not from without."

Ralph looked upon its outward form as a hollow ceremony to be listened to out of politeness, but to be given no consideration by serious-minded men.

"Shall we go to the ward and see the patients?" asked Barton.

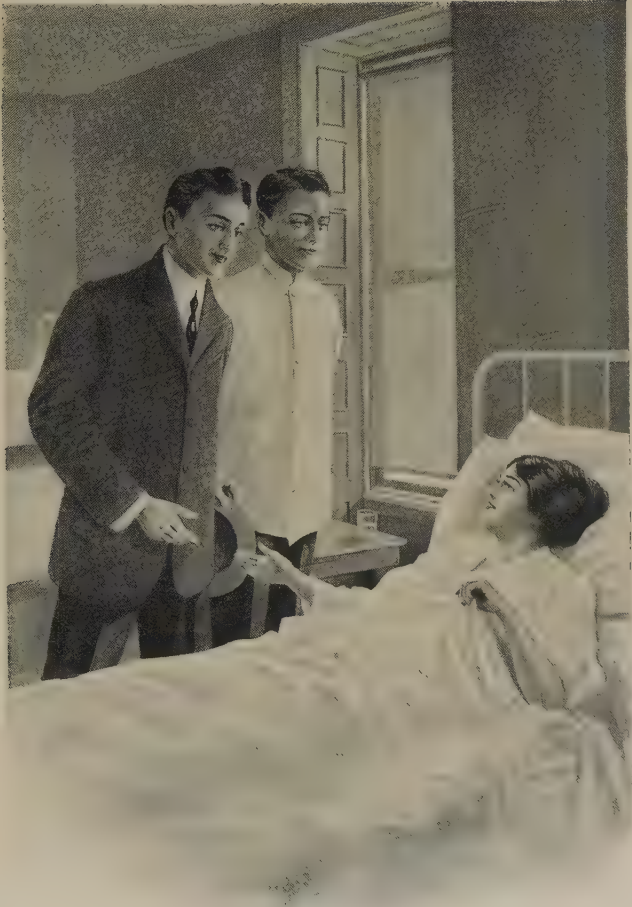
"By all means," answered Ralph, eagerly.

Barton led the way to the ward where Frank was confined in her bed. Dr. Fields approached the bedside, and taking Frank's hand in his, said:

"This is Mr. Henry."

It was the first time she had ever heard his name, though she felt that she had known him ever so long. Ralph was embarrassed. He had wondered what he should say to the girl. The introduction was unexpected, but as apt as unexpected.

"I am glad to meet you," said Frank, as she held



"It was the first time she had ever heard his name."—page 78.

out her hand to him. Ralph took the thin white hand in his, and said:

"I am delighted to hear how nicely you are doing. The Doctor tells me you will be well in a very short time."

The head nurse then requested Dr. Fields to come to the dressing room, leaving Ralph and Frank alone. He pulled a chair to the bed, and said:

"I have a little scheme for you. How would you like to go to the country for a little visit? The Doctor tells me that it would restore you to perfect health."

"I would like it very much, if I could only go."

"I think we can arrange it. My home is in the country, and I have a sister just about your age. I have told them about you, and they want you to come down and visit my sister, Bess. You can ride and drive and take long walks over the farm. The outdoor air and sunshine, with exercise, will make you strong." Frank clapped her hands together and listened to Ralph's plans, with her face aglow with interest. Her features darkened, however, and she said:

"Oh, how I would love to go, but it is impossible."

"I will see what can be done," said he, as he took her hands in his to say goodby.

Frank's face colored slightly and her eyes followed him to the door. In the hall he met Mrs. Grogan, who was waiting to see him.

"How do you do, Mrs. Grogan," said Ralph.

"I'm getting along foine. You came to the house at the wrong time. I forgot to tell you not to come

when my old man was home."

"I am very sorry, indeed, that my visit was so untimely," said Ralph. "I would not have been the cause of all this trouble for the world."

"Oh, well, it's all done now, and I guess I'm better off. There wasn't no pleasure in living with him, nohow."

Ralph made a mental note of the old woman's philosophy, and then said:

"Mrs. Grogan, I want to ask a favor of you. I have one sister, who lives in the country, and I want your daughter to make her a visit. I am sure the trip will be good for her."

"She can go if she loikes," said Mrs. Grogan. "There is nowhere else for her to go 'til I can find a place for us to stay, unless we go back to the shack, and I don't want to do that."

"No, you must not go back there. I'll speak to the Superintendent and see if you cannot stay here for a while."

"Oh, thanks," said Mrs. Grogan.

Ralph went direct to his boarding house. Mrs. Higgins saw him coming and met him at the foot of the stairs.

"I am so glad to see you, Mr. Henry. So sorry you had all of this trouble. Wasn't it too bad that Grogan died? We are all so distressed for you."

She placed her hand on Ralph's shoulder, and said:

"Be brave, my boy. God, in His infinite mercy, looks after all of His sheep, and you will not be deserted in the dark hour of peril. Though the waves

of adversity toss us about on the sea of trouble, there is a sustaining grace for those whose faith is as strong as a rock. Our ships are guided by a hand that knows no weakening, and we are looked after by an all-seeing eye, so that, though we sometimes lose our way and are about to be swallowed up by the angry waves, we are brought safe to port at last and anchored on the ever green shore."

During this recital Ralph wondered if Mrs. Higgins would ever get her speech safely to port; it seemed to him that it was in imminent danger of going to pieces. He slowly climbed the stairs, backward, listening politely and gauging his speed so that he could disappear promptly as soon as the old lady was safe "under the sheltering rock."

"The rain falleth alike upon the just and the unjust, and the righteous shall be upheld in their righteousness, saith the Lord. You have only to think of that to be comforted."

The old lady's eyes were filled with tears, and she added:

"But if the Lord seems to forsake you, and there is anything I can do, all you have to do is to let me know."

Ralph thanked her and hastened to his room. Mrs. Higgins wiped the tears from her eyes and said:

"It seems like that boy is a son to me."

Ralph wrote to his mother and sister and told them all the particulars. He asked Bess to come to the city and persuade Frank to go back with her.

Calling Rastus, he gave him the letter, with instructions to post it, and then lay down and was soon fast asleep.

* * * * *

After lunch Dr. Charts and Mr. Henry retired to the library, where Ralph was the subject of discussion. It was decided he should stay at school and continue his studies. Mr. Henry had thought it best for him to go home, but was persuaded by the Doctor that Ralph's mind needed occupation, and so Mr. Henry yielded his position.

"I am due at 2 o'clock for a lecture," said the Doctor. "Will you go down and hear a sample of the dry stuff your son listens to nine hours a day?"

"With great pleasure," said Mr. Henry.

Dr. Charts went first to see his wife, whom he found thoroughly composed.

"Are you going to lecture to-day, dear?" she asked.

"Yes, and I will be at the college from 2 to 3, and am then going to the office."

He rejoined Mr. Henry and the two drove immediately to the college.

For half an hour before time for the lecture the students were arriving from every school in the city. It had been announced among the students at the various schools that there would be a little demonstration in Dr. Charts' honor, and all were asked to contribute to the occasion by their presence. Ten minutes before the hour the immense amphitheatre

was packed. Not suspecting anything unusual, the Doctor stepped briskly into the "bull pen," followed by Mr. Henry. He was staggered at the sight and almost deafened by the noise. The applause kept up, during which every known method of producing sounds from the human voice was resorted to. Dr. Charts held up his hand in an effort to restrain them, but it only gave a fresh impetus to the applause. With his face red with embarrassment, he beat a hasty retreat from the amphitheatre, leaving the astounded Mr. Henry standing awkwardly in the centre of the "pen," not knowing whether to run or stay. Immediately two or three on the front row sprang over the rail and held up their hands. It acted like magic. The noise ceased instantly. The spokesman said, hurriedly:

"We will try to induce the Doctor to come back."

"If he don't come back, we will carry him back," shouted someone.

As soon as the self-appointed committee had retired, the janitor entered and said:

"Boys, you'll have to cut that out. You are making too much noise."

"Pass him up," some shouted, and before he could make his escape he was lifted over the rail and up the steep incline he went over the heads of all the boys. Everyone near enough contributed a push, so that he neither stopped nor touched a seat until he was deposited with a thud on the floor, thirty feet above, amid the yells and laughter of a thousand students. Dr. Charts reappeared and was greeted by clapping of hands, which ceased in a few

seconds. The Doctor stood fumbling his watch charm, with his eyes fixed intently on the floor for fully half a minute, during which there was absolute quiet in the great amphitheatre. He was evidently at a loss to know just what to say. Finally some wag on the top row said:

"Louder!"

This was followed by a general burst of merriment, in which the Doctor joined heartily. This little incident put him entirely at his ease, and he said:

"Gentlemen, there must be a thousand of you packed in this amphitheatre. Were I a commanding officer and you my army, even Gibraltar must succumb."

The boys appreciated the compliment and gave him due notice of it.

"Words do not suffice," continued the Doctor, "for me to express the gratitude I feel toward you for your loyalty. When I left the room a moment ago, it was not from anger, but because I was completely overpowered by the weight of your demonstration. I was speechless with surprise. I, in turn, have a little surprise in store for someone. Let me introduce to you the father of Ralph Henry."

The entire student body arose and gave such a cheer as the building never heard before. That it was a surprise was unmistakable. It would be hard to say who was more astonished, Mr. Henry or the students. As soon as they were seated again, someone said:

"Speech!"

From all over the house came one at a time from fifty men: "Speech! Speech! Speech!"

"You're in for it, Mr. Henry," said Dr. Charts.

Mr. Henry smiled, and said:

"Boys, Dr. Charts is the meanest, most unselfish man I have ever met, except you. He is unselfish, because he wishes to divide the honor with me; he is mean because he has taken advantage of me, as you have of him. Does my son act this way?"

There was much laughter and cries of "No! No! No! He's good! He's Sunday school!"

"If I thought he was that, I'd be tempted to disown him," said Mr. Henry.

"You needn't worry," said someone. "He will inherit the money all right," said another.

"I am proud to see the loyalty of you men to your professor. It bespeaks a big heart in every one of you, and assures me that you have a good example before you in him. Whatever turn this unfortunate affair may take, I feel greatly encouraged to know what a powerful ally we will have in the student body of Louisville."

Mr. Henry's words were greeted with prolonged applause. It would be a mistake to pronounce this performance "rowdyism." No people ever said, "Hail to the King!" with more sincerity than did these boys render homage to one of the faculty who was a hero in their eyes. Such occurrences give the medical student a hard name, and yet when you consider that these men sit on the benches nine or ten hours a day, Saturday included, listening to lectures; when you consider also that they are denied

most of the social privileges that are accorded other students and that they lack exercise, you will understand that the pent-up energy must find an outlet somewhere. The college building must be their campus and the benches their recreation grounds

* * * * *

Ralph was aroused by a knock at his door.

"Come in!" he cried.

Rastus entered and handed him a note. Ralph tore it open hurriedly and read:

"Come to the Galt House.

BESS."

"Bess at the Galt House!" he cried.

He pulled on his topcoat as he descended the stairs, left word for Mrs. Higgins that he would not be at home for supper, and hastened to the hotel. He went directly to the clerk and found his mother and sister registered. Getting the number of their room, he hurried to them.

Bess was waiting in the hall, and throwing her arms around his neck, cried as if she were about to lose him forever.

"How did you know so soon?" he asked in astonishment.

"After you left we were so blue and lonesome that we decided to come to the city on a later train. We came straight to the hotel, where we secured an afternoon paper and read all of the particulars. We

didn't know where to reach father, so I called a messenger and sent a note to you."

"Father is at the 'Louisville,' said Ralph, after he had greeted his mother. Going to the phone he called that hotel and asked for Mr. Ralph Henry, Sr. In a moment his father answered.

"Don't tell him we are here," whispered Bess. "Let's surprise him."

"This is Ralph talking. Can you come up to the Galt House right away?"

"Oh, nothing, just an old friend that would like to see you."

"No, he cannot leave here just now."

"Good! We will expect you in a few minutes."

Mr. Henry was very much surprised to find his entire family in the city. Being somewhat of a philosopher and an even-tempered man, he was really glad they were all here. His heart had been heavy for Ralph's sake, and it was a relief to have someone to sympathize with him. He promptly ordered his effects transferred to the Galt and took up a temporary residence. It was decided at dinner that Bess and her mother should go to the hospital in the morning.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MASTER IMPULSE—A LATTER DAY PASSION.

After the examining trial, Vic Noodles went to his office and sat down to plan the future of the case against Dr. Charts.

"Mr. Reeder," he remarked aloud, "you have done your part and placed me in your debt."

Vic Noodles had what you might term the thinking habit. He was accustomed to give himself over to the business of thinking deliberately upon questions that crossed his path. He didn't think casually. He made it his business to occasionally abandon his physical exertions, and, in an attitude of absolute rest, to argue and analyze in a cool, deliberate and painstaking manner, all questions that immediately concerned him. He was often able in this way to foresee results and so he came to have the reputation of farsightedness. Pure speculative fancy was unknown to him. His castles were never built of air. They were, moreover, always built in his own bailiwick and out of timber at his fingers' ends.

Of the fact that his motive in this case was dictated by pure, personal ambition, he was coldly aware. His actions were certainly not the result of any grudge against Dr. Charts; in fact, he only saw the doctor as an opportunity that fell unexpectedly

in his way. Under other circumstances he would have done that individual a favor.

It is a product of our modern civilization that professional ambition has come to be a powerful factor in moulding our careers and directing our actions. In many cases, without a modicum of personal animus, we may wound the sensibilities of our most intimate friend. It is quite sufficient for us that we have our own selfish ends in view. Specialization of work and emulation between specialists is nowadays carried to such a point that a new motive—we may call it a passion—has been evolved in the human breast, quite unknown to our forbears, but which seems to be a spring of action quite as strong as old-fashioned jealousy.

It is quite impossible to estimate to what lengths this latter day passion will lead a man. The modern reporter is a product, who, as a man, is a gentleman, and who, under ordinary circumstances, would respect the sacred privacy of the family; yet, as a reporter, the scandal must be given publicity, not from any inherent good there may be in the airing, but since it advances the editor's opinion of his professional prowess. The story, as a story, is too good to keep and so he tramples under foot all other considerations in order to publish.

The doctor, the lawyer, the minister, each may ride to fame on cars of Juggernaut. And so it has come to be no longer a matter of astonishment that this modern motive will create actions that would have been quite inexplicable to other generations.

The idea of a dual personality has been shown in

many forms since the time of Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes, and yet to me, this new vis-a-tergo exhibits it in a new light: the man and the reporter, the man and the lawyer, the man and the doctor;—two individuals in one, not necessarily diametrically opposed as the good and the bad, but a drawing out, a step in advance of that other self,—a new ego, the result of modern professional competition.

And so we find, in Vic Noodles, an exemplification of the workings of this master impulse. Not villainous by nature, he is carried along, perhaps unconscious of the bold relief in which he appears by comparison.

“The result,” thought Vic, “was even better than I had hoped for. That the charge was not manslaughter, as it should have been, is exceedingly fortunate for me. Ralph Henry is under arrest and will have to face the charge of accessory. That discredits his testimony in behalf of Dr. Charts. Mrs. Grogan will have an opportunity to recite old Grogan’s cruelties to the jury, so that she will prejudice her testimony. Now, if the daughter could be thrown in the society of this man, Henry, and some suggestions made to her, I may be able to make the jury believe she is unwilling to testify against Dr. Charts. If the jury once gets it in their heads that they are being deceived or imposed upon, no amount of evidence would be able to undo their prejudice. My observation of human nature has been such that I firmly believe prejudice to be the most powerful trait in the character of man and let you once create prejudice in a body of men, it will dictate their

action more surely than any appeal to the finer emotions. I must prevent, however, the same story being told by all witnesses. There is nothing so effective on the minds of the jury in a criminal case as repetition and consistency. The outcome amounts to this: If I can produce conflicting testimony and establish a jury prejudice, the verdict is mine and my reputation as a prosecutor is established. I am sure of Grogan. The testimony of Henry and Charts may coincide; in fact, I prefer that it should. A mere suggestion of rehearsal on their part may arouse suspicion in the jury. The testimony of Mrs. Grogan and her daughter must conflict. The power of mental suggestion is great but I don't believe I can work that on the daughter. If they could be separated in some way, I feel that, by sheer force of constant application, Mrs. Grogan's story can be so bent as to vary widely from the daughter's. This will necessitate having her under my influence in some way. Her story may be altered in minor details, one at a time, and so imperceptibly, that the main facts will soon arrange themselves in order and the story will be altered without her realizing it. I think that I will go to the hospital and have a talk with her; something may turn up that I can use."

At the hospital, Vic asked for Frank Grogan and was shown to the ward and introduced by Dr. Fields.

"I have often heard father speak of you," said Frank.

"Yes; we were good friends," said Vic. "He has

often spoken of you to me. He once described you so minutely that I think that I would have recognized you."

"Indeed!" said Frank. "What was the occasion of the description?" Vic was confused for a moment. The fact is that he had heard Grogan speak of a daughter and the description had been extracted from the old man as a direct result of his questions.

"I don't remember exactly, though I think he was talking of sending you to school."

Frank smiled. Her smile disconcerted him not a little, and he deftly changed the subject.

"There are so many patients here, don't they worry you?"

"Not at all," was the reply. "I am very much interested in every one of them."

"Do you get plenty to eat and are the beds comfortable?"

"There is nothing that I can complain of. I feel very sorry for the patients sometimes, but I can bear that. I can imagine more pleasant places to live, but I am very grateful for the attention I have received here."

Her face lighted and she continued:

"Mr. Henry was kind enough to invite me to visit his sister in the country. Wouldn't it be fine to live in the country? Do you know I have never been out of the city in my life? How glorious it must be to have everything all outdoors and air. To hear the birds and watch the animals and take long walks over the hills."

She was much elated, but Vic was apparently in-

different to her recital. It was a studied indifference, however, for he was filled with secret joy. Henry inviting her to his country home was just what Vic Noodles most wished, and yet had been absolutely unable to plan. He was extremely solicitous that she should accept the invitation—but he merely remarked while looking about the room.

"I suppose you will go."

"No, I cannot go."

Vic made no reply, but after inquiring about her mother, took his departure. Once out of the hospital he said aloud:

"She must go to the country, and above all places, to this man Henry's house. She says she cannot go. The reason is readily understood. However, I think that difficulty can be overcome."

He went straight to his office and sat down at the typewriter. After writing for a few minutes he folded the document and placed it in his pocket; then he paced up and down the room, lost in thought. Again going to the machine he hastily wrote a few lines, which he placed in an envelope without any business heading and addressed it to Dr. Theodore Potts. The telephone rang. It was an invitation to lunch with some political friends. Important matters were to be discussed, said the host. Vic accepted, and after calling up one or two parties to make engagements, hurriedly took his coat and hat and hastened to join the party. He had not left the office more than five minutes when his grandfather, who had finished his business sooner than he had expected entered. Passing through Vic's room, he

noticed a letter unsealed upon the table. He opened it and read:

“Dr. Theo. Potts, Fulton St., City:

My Dear Doctor—In regard to your fee in Grogan’s case, I wish to say that he had a small amount of life insurance, and if you will call at my office at 7 this evening to give me a certificate of death, I will collect and pay your bill out of the insurance. Bring the bill with you. Yours,

VIC NOODLES.”

“Who’s Potts? And what connection had he with Grogan’s case? And what has Vic to do with his life insurance, and the payment of Dr. Potts?” thought the old man.

He replaced the letter exactly as he found it, went to his own room and turned the matter over in his mind a good many times. But business matters with which he was more directly concerned came to his notice and he thought no more of the letter.

Upon reaching the hotel Vic Noodles rang for a messenger, and after leaving instructions at the office to send him to the cafe he joined his companions. When the messenger arrived, Vic reached in his pocket for the letter. After searching through his clothes, it dawned upon him that in his haste he had left the letter on his desk. Excusing himself, he told the messenger to follow, and hurried to his office. The letter was just as he had left it. He sealed it, gave it to the messenger, and after telling

him that an answer was unnecessary, hastened to re-join his companions. At the conference it was decided that Vic should address a rally on The Point on the following night, the regular speaker being ill. When he returned to his office he wrote and mailed the following letter to Mrs. Grogan at the City Hospital:

“Dear Madam:—In looking over my private papers I find a small life insurance policy which your husband deposited with me some time ago for safe keeping. If you will call at my office to-morrow, between 4 and 5, to sign up the claim, I can collect it for you. The amount is \$125.
Yours, VIC NOODLES.”

Vic well knew that Frank Grogan would not accept money from him nor permit her mother, if she knew it, and besides, he had no legitimate excuse for giving them that sum. Without the money, he knew Frank could not go to the country, so his ready wit hit upon the insurance scheme to furnish her with the necessary cash with which to buy clothing.

“That is a neat advance,” said he, “especially before the election, but I have set my heart on this case and am willing to make any sacrifice to win. Great results are not achieved in this life except by persistent effort, and the fellow whose persistency dates back the farthest is the one who has the best chance to win. Success is often in direct proportion to the magnitude of the effort. If I should

lose the case I have only done her a good turn ; that will balance any damage that may accrue to her friend. After all, compensation is a good moral guide, just so the evil doesn't greatly overbalance the good we do, I should say you were a good man. And then I would have spent the same money for campaign purposes, anyway."

CHAPTER IX.

A GLIMPSE OF THE INTERIOR.

On Tuesday morning Mrs. Grogan brought a letter, which Frank hurriedly tore open and read.

"Why, it's addressed to you, mother, and it's from Mr. Noodles."

"Read it to me, Frank. What on earth can he want?"

Frank read the letter, and mother and daughter looked at each other in utter astonishment. One hundred and twenty-five dollars all at once! Frank repeated the sum; she had never heard of so much money, and it was all to belong to her mother.

"You must go to Mr. Noodles' office this evening at 4 o'clock," said Frank.

"What will we do with all of the money, Frank?"

"Why, mother, we will pay for father's funeral. I have been so worried about him. What do you think would have become of him? Oh, I am so glad that we will have this money."

Mrs. Grogan made no immediate reply, but seemed absorbed in her own reflections.

"We will give him a burial, won't we, mother?"

"I will attend to that, child."

Mrs. Grogan knew that the city undertaker had already taken charge of the body, but she kept the

news to herself. She was not likely to spend any of the money on a funeral for her dead spouse. She had other plans. She wisely concluded to keep them to herself, however, and so left the ward.

* * * * *

As soon as a death occurs at the hospital, the body is rolled and pinned tightly in a sheet and immediately taken to the "dead house," where, in nearly every case, an autopsy is conducted by the interne in charge. To the internes at the hospital a "P. M.," as they express it, was denied in Grogan's case. Just who denied it could not be ascertained, but it became generally understood that it would not be permitted. Just how general impressions of this kind occur I am unable to say, but that such do occur, and entirely upon hearsay evidence, is certain. How much of the thought of the world is based upon such foundations.

"I understand we don't get a P. M. on Grogan," said Harris to Field. "At least that's what Pratt says."

All quoted authority, but it could not be traced to its origin, or at least no effort was made by anyone in particular to trace it. Therein lay the mistake.

That someone created the impression is certain; that it is a powerful agent in the hands of someone who knows how to use it is equally certain—Vic Noodles was a past master at it.

So Grogan's body went to the city undertaker, "Mr. Junius," and was "buried" in "Potters' Field,"

notwithstanding the fact that during his last days he was provided with a private room and a special nurse. In other words, his body was prepared and taken to the Morgue, where it was sold by the city to the medical colleges for the sum of \$25.

Frank Grogan was running a little temperature every day and was ordered to bed by the staff. During this time she had observed something of the character of the people about her. It was a great education for her. Her sensitive nature received many a shock. In one bed was an old woman whose locks were silvered; she could only get about with the aid of crutches, which were her weapons of defense, and many a hard knock had been administered to policemen by her manipulation of them. She was almost blind; she had been brought in the night before, while in a state of intoxication. She had been terribly burned, and cursed and groaned continually.

When a nurse attempted to quiet her, she showered volleys of the vilest of oaths on her. The doctor was called and attempted to quiet her by talking. Failing in this, he threatened, telling her he would send her away from the hospital, but nothing was of any avail. He only brought down showers of curses from this hardened old soul. When everything else had failed, he ordered a hypodermic, and she hushed up at once. She was working for the morphine, and as soon as she got it, became perfectly quiet. This is of daily occurrence. Patients of this sort will resort to any means to secure the soothing influence of the drug.

Cocaine fiends keep clear of the hospital, because there is no chance to secure that drug there. A young woman appeared there who had used toothache as a ruse and insisted on cocaine for extraction. A dentist told me she had come to his office complaining of toothache and "wanted it out."

"Doctor," she said, "can't you put something in the gum to kill the pain?"

The doctor made an examination and found only three teeth, although the woman was not past thirty. He injected cocaine around the root of one, though all were decayed, and she then said, coolly:

"Now, you can pull any one you please."

It was the cocaine she wanted. Not that she expected to get the full effect from as small a quantity as a 1 per cent. solution, but in her extremity, when she was no longer able to buy the drug, she would resort to this practice to get even a trace. All of her teeth had been extracted in this way.

Frank looked at the crippled old woman and wondered what her youth had been. Perhaps she had begun life amid surroundings very similar to those of which she herself was a centre. She shuddered as the thought flashed through her brain that it might some day represent her own picture. She was old enough to realize that with her environment the inevitable tendency was in that direction.

In another bed was a girl not over fourteen, who was as absolutely devoid of shame and modesty as if those qualities had never had existence. Frank talked with her and asked her if she had a home.

"No," was the reply. "I left home when I was twelve years old, and have never been back."

In the bed next to Frank was a girl who had been brought in the night before. She was a beautiful creature, but a short existence in the under world had caused her to place a pistol to her breast and attempt to end her life. The doctors had operated upon her and removed the bullet, and were compelled to tie her hands to keep her from tearing the wound open. She was yelling and cursing at every breath. In another bed across the room was a pale-faced little woman of twenty-four, who, though she had a child's face, was the mother of a beautiful boy three years of age, who was brought by the father every day to her. This woman had been ill of pneumonia, and had spent all of her money for medical attention. Her husband was a poor man, but provided well for his family when able to work. An unfortunate accident resulted in a broken leg at the time his wife was sick with pneumonia. They had been thrifty and had saved a little money. The physician in attendance was compelled to send them to a hospital. They chose a private infirmary, and in the course of a month their entire store had gone into the coffers of the institution, and the poor little woman was compelled at last to go to the City Hospital, where she was thrown in contact with the lowest class that the city affords. All patients are treated alike at a city institution; there is no provision for the separation of the good and the bad. The only discrimination is sex and color. There the worthy poor are thrown

in contact with the vilest of the vile, unless the conscientious staff officer is able to know a good woman when he sees her, and throw around her the small protection of a screen. Pneumonia had terminated in an abscess in the lungs, and she came into the hospital for surgical treatment. This ward contains the worst element that is enrolled at the hospital. Its beds are filled with the denizens of the Red Light; it occasionally contains a good woman, or an innocent girl, more's the pity, for the surroundings are no more fit for the one than for the other. Think of the moral tone and dangerous contact to which a poor innocent girl is exposed in being compelled to seek medical or surgical attention in a city institution. These cases are protected by the staff surgeons as far as possible, but they are absolutely unable to prevent evil influences from working on a girl who is at all susceptible.

Frank was particularly attracted to a patient sufferer in a bed near her, who had been admitted with pneumonia and placed in the medical ward next to a case of pulmonary consumption, from whom she contracted the disease; thus she had come to the hospital for the treatment of one disease only to contract thereby one more horrible. This is a common occurrence; not a Winter passes but this is repeated in our City Hospital and still it is allowed to go on and on, year after year, without any effort at isolation. The same thing is true in other cities. The people are just beginning to see the evil effects of this, and in a few cities steps are being taken to remedy the evil. Anti-tuberculosis societies are

springing into existence and are educating the people. These societies are going to compel hospital authorities to protect innocents from dangerous proximity to tuberculars.

Frank had been absorbed in thought for some time when two ladies entered the room and asked the nurse some question. She noticed her lay down her charts and proceed to conduct them somewhere. Just then Dr. Fields entered the ward, and seeing the ladies, advanced rapidly to meet them. Frank heard him say :

"Why, Bess! What brought you here?"

He then greeted the elder lady and introduced them both to the nurse, during which Frank was all excitement. They were evidently close friends of Dr. Fields, and when she heard the name Bess, it flashed through her mind that it was possibly Ralph Henry's sister. She watched the features and fancied a resemblance, and as the entire party started toward her bed, Frank felt her heart beat violently. She was sure they were coming to see her. She was not disappointed.

Turning to the party, whom he preceded, Dr. Fields said :

"Bess, this is the young lady you want to see."

Without saying a word Bess unhesitatingly bent slowly down to kiss Frank, and then laid her cheek against the feverish face of the trembling patient.

So slow and deliberate was this action that it was apparent that it came direct from the heart. The sympathy was so genuine that Frank was pro-

foundly affected. Her arms stole gently around Bess's neck and the tears flowed thick and fast. Bess made no effort to disengage herself, but silently permitted this lonely girl to hold her in her embrace.

Then the lips sought each other, and the embrace terminated in a kiss which made Fields' pulsations jump up to the hundred mark. Mrs. Henry stood a silent spectator until Bess looked up, and, smiling through the tears in her own eyes, said:

"Mama, this is Frank."

That simple introduction sent another thrill through the lonely girl. It was the first time in her life she had ever experienced any real sympathy from anyone. During her brief school experience, she had been shunned by her associates, nor had she sought their society. Her poverty and pride combined to make her isolation complete. Words are absolutely inadequate to picture the wonderful effect that this meeting had on Frank. Mrs. Henry took the thin hand in hers, and said:

"My child, we have heard Ralph speak of you so much that we have been very anxious to meet you."

The reference to Ralph sent an electric shock through Frank's nervous system that was absolutely new to her, and she closed her eyes and repeated slowly the words of Mrs. Henry. Dr. Fields procured chairs and Bess pulled one of them close to the bed. Dr. Fields then said:

"Mrs. Henry, suppose you leave these girls together and let me show you through the hospital."

Bess looked up at him, and her smile told of her

approval. As soon as they were alone, Bess said:

"I suppose Ralph told you that we wanted you to come and make us a long visit?"

Frank had not taken her eyes from Bess' face. She seemed feasting them on the beauties there.

"Yes," she replied, "it would be so nice. I do wish I could go."

Bess was disappointed. It had never occurred to her that there might be anything to prevent it. She had expected to pay all of her expenses, and never dreamed that there would be any difficulty, but she now began to feel that Frank would not accept so much from her, and in her presence she hesitated to even suggest it. Both were silent for some time, during which Mrs. Grogan entered.

"Mother," said Frank, "this is Miss Henry."

Bess arose and was about to kiss her, but the "tout ensemble" forbade. The typical old Irish-woman in the blue calico dress, too short by at least a foot, standing with her arms akimbo, actually shocked Bess.

"I'm glad to know ye," said Mrs. Grogan.

Frank's face was crimson, and she said:

"Miss Henry, our dresses are furnished by the hospital. They are all too short."

"Divil a bit do I moind if they are too short," said Mrs. Grogan.

"Mrs. Grogan, can't you let your daughter come and make me a visit?"

"There is nothing to hinder," answered the old lady. "I'll give her some money to buy some new things, an' she can fix up as foine as she likes. You

see, Miss Henry, my husband left some life insurance money, which I will have to-morrow."

Bess was delighted, and it was soon decided that Frank should accompany Bess to her home, and just as soon as she was able the two should go shopping together.

CHAPTER X.

A CHARACTER MISSING.

We take up the thread of our story after the lapse of several weeks, during which time several things have transpired that are vital to our narrative. Bess, accompanied by Frank, had made the round of the shops. She had selected the material and superintended the making of some clothes for Frank, who had been persuaded to leave the hospital and take up a temporary residence with them at the Galt House, where a dressmaker had been employed to sew for both of the girls. Many a pleasant trip down town was made by them. Bess knew the town thoroughly in the shopping district, and it was no end of delight to her to watch the face and happiness of her friend, while trying on a new wrap or hat. She was forever amused at the witty remarks of the girl about her shoes, gloves and hat. At last all was ready, and the Henry family retired to their country home, taking Frank with them.

It had been arranged by Ralph and Dr. Fields that Mrs. Grogan should be employed at the hospital, and that Frank's letters to her mother should be entrusted to Miss Barr, one of the nurses, who promised in return to send news of her mother.

Vic Noodles had been elected Commonwealth's

Attorney, and as a result, the firm of Noodles had resigned from the defense of Ralph and Dr. Charts, since the senior Noodles thought that as the prosecution must be conducted by his grandson it would not look well for the firm to defend them.

The election of Vic Noodles was a bitter disappointment to his grandfather, who had rather Vic had entered the firm as his own son had done. He had laid great hopes on his grandson conducting the business, after his death, as it had been done during his lifetime, but nothing could persuade Vic from his purpose; and so the old man acquiesced in a matter over which he exercised no control.

Vic had in the meantime succeeded in presenting enough evidence to the Grand Jury to lead that body to return a true bill against Dr. Charts. Judge Hindman had accordingly entered the case on the docket for the fifteenth of January. Upon the recommendation of the elder Noodles, the firm of Foster & Ryan had been engaged to defend Dr. Charts. Foster & Ryan had a large legal practice, and after preparing a temporary brief of the case, they employed a young attorney, a nephew of Mr. Ryan, Mr. Barry by name, who had recently been admitted to the bar, and who had begun practice in his uncle's office, to look up evidence in the case. Mr. Barry had called on their clients and had taken their depositions. He set about industriously beating the bush in every direction to secure any evidence that might bear on the case.

It was late in the evening, in December, when Dr. Fields came one evening to Mrs. Higgins' boarding

house, and asked for Mr. Henry. He was shown to the room by Rastus, where they found Ralph seated before the fire with a letter in his hand, his head thrown back on the great armchair, sound asleep.

Fields pulled a chair up to the fire and sat down without awakening his friend; then, taking a letter out of his pocket, he began to read. Ralph opened his eyes and gave no sign of his surprise, but sat quietly and watched his friend, who was deeply absorbed in the letter. When Barton had finished and turned to arouse Ralph, he saw that individual smiling at him, as though it were a subject for great amusement.

"A letter, eh?" said Ralph.

"Yes," said his friend, "and I see you have one also."

"Yes; Bess writes that we are expected home for the holidays."

Fields colored a little and replied:

"I have just received my invitation to come with you."

"Is the invitation formal? Let me see it. Is it engraved?"

"Never mind about the formality; I have received the invitation, and that is sufficient."

"I suppose you will send regrets."

"Do you wish me to?" asked Barton, with an injured air.

"No, Barton, not by any means. I have just been dreaming of the pleasant times in store for us. How Bess and—and—the folks will be to the train to

meet us. The drive home, the Christmas dinner, the country parties, the ride and the fun. If there should happen to be snow, wouldn't it be glorious? We have a double sleigh and a splendid team."

"Has the double sleigh seats for four or six?" queried Barton.

"Why, four. Why?"

"What will we do about the folks?"

"Oh, never mind the folks; after we get home from the train, they will take care of themselves."

"I say, Ralph, what do you suppose Frank looks like since Bess has had hold of her?"

"Poor girl! I hope she will have at least one happy Christmas."

"One, you barbarian! Here's hoping she may have a thousand."

"Give me your hand, my boy," said Ralph. "I hadn't figured quite so far ahead."

"Bess writes me she is very happy during the day, but at night she sobs herself to sleep," said Barton.

"What? Did Bess write you that? She has not said anything about it to me," and Ralph paced up and down the room. "I suppose," he continued, "she dreads to come back to Louisville."

"And who could blame her? Perhaps Bess can marry her to some good farmer down your way."

Ralph's eyes flashed fire, and he mumbled something through his teeth that sounded awfully like "damn." Barton laughed at his friend, and said:

"Wait until we take a look at her. Let us see how she shows up in good clothes. Then we can plan her future better."

"What do you take her for?" said Ralph, indignantly. "A filly in light harness?"

Barton realized he was treading on dangerous ground and changed the subject.

"By the way," he said, "did you know her mother had left the hospital?"

"No! Where is she?" Ralph demanded fiercely.

"No one seems to know. She left a week ago, without saying a word to anyone. There are two letters for her from Frank. Miss Barr has them, and we don't know where to send them. She asked me to-day if she should return them."

"No, no, not by any means. That would spoil Frank's Christmas completely. Find out where she is, Barton."

"I can't. I've tried. I've questioned everyone about the house, and no one knows a thing."

"Well, why haven't you told me this before? That is the strangest thing I ever heard of. The idea of her leaving and not telling anyone where she was going. Perhaps Frank has not heard from her, and that is the reason she sobs herself to sleep. We must look into this matter. But come, it is time for supper; then I will go with you to the hospital and see if we can learn anything. It strikes me as very strange indeed for a girl to exhibit so much affection for a parent that has been so cruel. I confess I don't understand anything about it."

"It is a case of misplaced affection," suggested Barton.

CHAPTER XI.

REMINISCENT.

It was late in the afternoon the day before Christmas, long after the accustomed time for the elder Mr. Noodles to have left his office. The clerks and assistants had all gone, after wishing each other a Merry Christmas. The janitor and elevator boy had each been in to wish Mr. Noodles a special Merry Christmas, and had received a dollar in return for their pains. Things were quiet in the big building and still Mr. Noodles sat in his armchair and smoked. It wasn't often that he gave himself up to idle reflection, but when he did, he became perfectly oblivious to his surroundings and time flew as if scurrying to get away from him. One after another of the great cases came into his memory, until he happened to alight upon his first great legal battle.

"Ah," he rubbed his hands together and muttered alongside his cigar, "that was a hard fight; evidence purely circumstantial, but I made it strong. They had money, lots of money, and they spent it. Poor old Brierly! I wonder if you are still alive? By George, I haven't thought of you in a good many years. I never was satisfied about your guilt, but I had to prosecute, or I thought I had to prosecute,

and I threw my life into it. What a mistake! How much over-zealous prosecution there is, just to make lawyers' reputations. That was a valuable lesson for me. I only wanted a light Penitentiary sentence, but I made it stronger than I intended. The jury was out forty-eight hours, with eleven for death penalty and one for ten years. That was Bob Gersten. Bob knew something of the case, I think. Finally Gersten consented to life imprisonment as a compromise. I remember I did not sleep well for a month after that case, and I have never prosecuted anyone since. Let me see; what year was that?"

The old man, now 75 years of age, walked firmly to his record cabinet and looked the matter up; 1855 the record read.

"Is it possible! Fifty years ago. I wonder when he died? I will write the warden and ask him to look up the records for me."

Noodles again took his seat and muttered: "Poor old Brierly. You're the only man on my conscience. What if he be still alive? Imprisoned for life, and on purely circumstantial evidence. Horrible!"

And the old man placed his hands over his face and was silent for some time.

"He had, I believe, a son and a daughter; twins. I remember his wife bringing them into court. It was only done to influence the jury, but that proved a ruse to their undoing, for I wasn't slow in pointing out the reason for their presence."

The office of the firm of Noodles was arranged on two sides of the building in the form of an L. Each

member had a private office, which opened into a common waiting room. Vic's room was next to his grandfather's. The elder Noodles had been very quiet for some time, when he heard footsteps in the hall, a key in the outer door, and then in the door of his grandson's consultation room. There were voices, too. On the streets below was to be heard only the scurrying of delivery wagons, hastening to distribute their Christmas burdens. Most people had gone to their homes to prepare for their Christmas celebration. The big office building was deserted and quiet. It was quite dark now, and there were no lights in the office until Vic turned on an incandescent in his room. Grandfather Noodles was all attention. He supposed Vic had gone home long before this. He listened. He heard Vic say:

"Kittie, I sent for you at this time because I knew there would be no one in the office, but tell me first, how is your grandmother?"

"Grandmother isn't as well to-day; she didn't sleep at all last night. We had to prop her up in bed and send for the doctor in the middle of the night. Her attacks of heart failure are more frequent of late. I don't know what we would do if it was not for your kindness, Mr. Noodles. Mother took so much attention that I couldn't go to work regularly, and was so often late that Mr. Vest told me he would have to get someone in my place. If you had not been kind enough to get Mrs. Grogan to come and stay with her, I don't know what we should have done."

"There now, Kittie, don't cry; you have always

been a brave girl. Mrs. Grogan will stay with you, and that will relieve you, so you can go to work regularly. By the way, how do you like your new place?"

"Oh, I get along very well; I am earning \$7 per week now, and we manage to live on that very comfortably."

"Does Mrs. Grogan ever ask about her daughter?"

"Oh, yes, and I have written to her twice, but of course we could not give her address because you forbade. Perhaps there are some letters for her at the hospital. Is there any way we could get them?"

"I don't know, Kittie. I will see what can be done."

"Now, Kittie, I want you to do me a favor. Ask Mrs. Grogan to-morrow to tell you the story of that affair on The Point, but before she tells you the story ask her if she remembers the trouble that Grogan had at Dr. Charts' school—the time he was arrested for disorderly conduct. Be sure you ask her this question, and then meet me here to-morrow evening at 7 o'clock, and recite the story to me exactly—now mind, exactly as she tells it to you."

"Why, what a funny idea!"

"Well, you see, Kittie, I am now Commonwealth's Attorney, and it is my duty to prosecute Dr. Charts."

"Well, I am sure he didn't mean to kill him," said Kittie hastily.

"I suppose not," said Vic; "all I want to know is the truth. I want to get at the bottom of this affair."

"You'll do that for me, won't you?"

"Yes, Mr. Noodles."

During this dialogue Grandfather Noodles had become deeply absorbed in the conversation. He went quietly to his door and noiselessly bolted it; then taking a seat nearer the partition which separated them, prepared to listen further. He recalled the letter that Vic had written to Dr. Potts. He began to see some connection. He was now aware that there was something hatching in the fruitful brain of his grandson, and he determined to find out just what it was. The conversation between Kittie and Vic was continued.

"Kittie, here is a little Christmas present for you."

"Oh!" she exclaimed, and clapped her hands together. "Mr. Noodles, you should not give that to me." It was an enameled watch, ever so tiny, and attached to a Fleur-de-lis pin.

"Now, the next time you get a patient to nurse, you can count the pulse."

"But I can't accept it."

"Oh, yes, you can. You have done me a great favor, and I just wish to show my appreciation. Take it; you have more than earned it."

Vic took the watch and, opening the back, handed it again to Kittie. She saw engraved on the inside, "Kittie, be brave." She thanked him, and said:

"I have always tried to be, but, Mr. Noodles, where have you heard that expression?"

"Oh, it's very common. Why do you ask?"

"Well, that is what grandmother has always said

to me. I remember at one time she took me on her knee and said: 'Kittie, your mother had a twin brother, and when they were babies their father was taken from me; the last words he uttered as he kissed me goodby were, "Kittie, be brave."'"

"Well," said Vic, "that was a very pretty coincidence. What caused your grandfather's death?"

"I don't know," said Kittie. "I have often asked mother, and she always said it was due to an accident."

They now left the office, and grandfather Noodles sat in his chair for hours without uttering a word. He then went to his desk, and after turning on the light, wrote the following letter:

"Mr. T. L. Sinks, Warden State Penitentiary, Frankfort, Ky.:

"Dear Sir:—Will you do me the kindness to trace the records and let me know the fate of John Brierly, sent up in 1855 for murder, life sentence? Yours,

"EBEN C. NOODLES."

He then put on his coat, and, after posting the letter, went home.

CHAPTER XII.

A SHIFT IN THE SCENERY.

Two days before Christmas Ralph and Barton Fields were busy packing their grips for their trip to the country. Rastus made himself generally useful.

"Does you reckon," said he, "dat you can git dem grips home all right?"

Ralph laughed:

"Why, Rastus, would you like to go along?"

The darkey seemed to grin all over his face, as he said:

"Do you suppose Mrs. Higgins would let me go?"

"Let us take him, Ralph," said Barton.

Ralph went to the door and called the landlady.

"Mrs. Higgins," he said, when that lady appeared, "can you spare Rastus for a week? We would like to take him to the country."

"Why, certainly, Mr. Henry, if he can be of any service to you."

"Run along, Rastus, and get your clothes changed, and I'll help finish the packing."

Rastus turned a handspring and disappeared down the hall like a cannon ball, while little Mrs. Higgins strapped the suitcase, brushed the boy's

clothes, helped them on with their coats and wished them a Merry Christmas.

"May the Lord bless you and make you happy," she said. "Be careful about the train and don't get off until it stops. Button your coats good. Where is your muffler, Mr. Henry?"

"Oh, I forgot to leave that out. Never mind; I won't need it."

But Mrs. Higgins already had one strap open, and she never stopped until she fished the muffler from the very bottom of the case. Then she packed all over again with a critical eye to see if Ralph had left out anything he might need.

"Now, are you ready? I'll go and hustle Rastus."

She opened the door hurriedly and collided with the darkey, who went down the hall as if he were going to a fire.

"Why, Lord bless me," said the good Mrs. Higgins, when she recovered her breath. "You'll kill someone yet before you get away."

"I didn't aim to done it," said Rastus, knitting his brow and trying to look sorry. The assumed expression of sorrow lighted by the twinkle in his eye made a very funny picture. Rastus had on a fur cap, a pair of ear muffs, a great coat that Ralph had given him and a pair of yarn mittens that Mrs. Higgins had knit. He balanced the grips, one in either hand, and then proceeded to dance a jig.

"Ras—tus!" yelled Mrs. Higgins. "What on earth is the matter with you? You'll drop them grips!"

Rastus started off, singing "Every little bit helps."

As the party went through the front gate, Mrs. Higgins yelled:

"Don't get hurt! Be careful of the train, and I'll have a good dinner for you on New Year's."

That evening when the train pulled into the station at Centreville, they found Bess and Frank waiting. Ralph rushed to meet his sister, whom he embraced, shook hands with Frank, and said:

"Where's mother?"

"She is at home. Frank and I thought we would drive over and meet you."

Bess gave her hand to Barton, and the party moved toward the team, which was tied nearby.

"Where is your grip?" asked Bess, looking around.

"Oh, yes, where's Rastus?"

But the darkey had recognized the rig and had piled the grips in front and had the team ready to start.

"Oh, you've brought Rastus," said Bess, in glee. "Glad to see you, Rastus," and she put her hand on his cap and "wooled" him.

Frank was very quiet. Barton helped her in the carriage and took a seat beside her. Bess took the reins and Rastus sat on the grips.

"How is mother?" asked Frank.

Barton told her that her mother was all right.

"I have had two letters from her," said Frank.

Ralph looked around at Barton, who was very much surprised, but who kept perfectly quiet. Ralph had avoided looking at Frank. He was conscious of a very great change in her appearance, but

was aware also that she would notice any scrutiny. Bess drew up the reins and reached for the whip. The rig fairly flew over the ground. Rastus fastened both hands on the dash and held tight. Occasionally he would look around and his broad grin told how much he enjoyed the ride. Supper was ready at the Henry house, when Johnny, the four-year-old son of the cook, who had been on the watch, burst into the room, yelling at the top of his voice:

"Here they come! Here they come!" and then disappeared as rapidly as he had entered.

Down went the paper, and grabbing his hat as he ran, Mr. Henry slipped his arm about the waist of his wife and fairly carried her through the hall, and down the walk to the gate, where Bess had brought her thoroughbreds to a stand. Ralph rushed to his mother's arms, while Mr. Henry shook hands with everybody, and the procession entered the house, with Ralph and his mother in the lead. Next came Mr. Henry and Frank, then Bess and Dr. Fields, while Rastus brought up the rear with the grips and little Johnny. They sat at the supper table until late. Everybody talked but Frank, who sat quietly at the table, and was evidently embarrassed. She had learned many things since she had come in contact with the family. Bright, quick, and with a sensitive consciousness of her lack of training, she had been an exceedingly keen observer of the manners of her friend. The change produced already was nothing less than marvelous. There was color in her face, and her dress was very neat.

She only spoke when addressed, but it was a pleasure to hear her. Her voice had a musical ring to it that was peculiar, in fact it attracted the attention of both Ralph and Barton.

The evening meal at the Henry's was especially delightful on this occasion. Mrs. Henry's intelligent and refined face glowed with happiness. Mr. Henry carved and served in a style that is equalled only by certain other country gentlemen.

Carving is an art lost to the cities. It is found in its highest development in the homes of a few country gentlemen—masters of etiquette—consummate in polish and hospitality, who take pride in the accomplishment and carve as taught by their fathers; hitting the joints of duck or turkey with a precision remarkable and serving with a grace that can only be native. Such was Mr. Henry.

"Now, gentlemen," said he, as he arose, "let me give you a practical demonstration of my knowledge of anatomy." He plunged the fork into the breast and poising the knife in his finger tips, with wrist arched, much as the accomplished violinist holds his bow, he severed the first joint with a single stroke.

Among his other accomplishments, Mr. Henry was a good listener, and he kept Barton Fields talking most of the time. Frank was very quiet, and, when the hostess finally led the way with Mr. Henry to the library, she timidly followed Bess closely, who went directly to the piano. Bess begged Frank to sing, but she blushed deeply and stammered her excuses. Not wishing to embarrass her friend, Bess began playing a popular air. Barton joined her and

began to sing, while Frank sought an obscure corner, where she was soon joined by Ralph.

"Have you any news of mother?" she asked timidly.

Ralph had anticipated the question. "Your mother is well," he said, "and desires that you make a long visit."

"When did you see her?"

"Why—let me see—it has not been long. In fact, I think it was——"

"In the past two weeks?" she asked, anxiously.

"Oh, yes," he answered, somewhat confused.

"You are deceiving me," she said, quietly.

"I deceive you?" said Ralph, with an injured air.

"Pardon me, I didn't mean to hurt you, but I am so uneasy."

Ralph looked at her tenderly. "Why?" he asked.

"I have written two letters." Her eyes became moist as she added: "They have not been answered."

"Oh, don't let that worry you. They will be answered."

"But I addressed them in care of Miss Barr at the hospital, and she has always answered before."

"Oh, she has been too busy," he answered lightly.

"I am so uneasy, I fear that everything is not going well. Is she still at the hospital, Mr. Henry?"

"Why, certainly," said Ralph, smiling.

"Unless I hear from her soon I shall go to Louisville," said Frank with decision.

"Your fears are foolish. Your mother is well and looking fine."

"Is—is—your case going well?" she asked.

Ralph forced a hearty laugh as he answered, "Oh, famously. You know, I may seem indifferent, but that affair doesn't give me any concern." He searched her countenance to see if she believed him.

Her face clouded and her eyes filled with tears.

He regretted his rash statements. He realized that she still thought tenderly of her father. He was much perplexed. He felt that he did not and could not fathom this girl.

"Why is it, Miss—Miss—Frank, that you love——"

"Ah!" she said, quickly anticipating a question that Ralph could not have finished. "Do you see a fault in your parents?"

"But that is quite——"

"Different?" she added, quickly.

"No, I didn't mean that. Frank, you are a strange girl. I can never quite understand you," said Ralph, hurriedly and in great confusion.

The mention of her first name by Ralph brought a blush to her cheeks and set her nerves tingling with delight.

"Let us join the others," she said, hurriedly.

Barton had finished singing and stood over Bess in earnest conversation, when Ralph struck up an old college song. At the first note Bess turned to the piano and struck the accompaniment.

Ralph and Barton had been chums in college and they sang lustily. "Gloriaus," et cet.



Is—'s your case going well?' she asked."— page 124.

“Gloriana Frangipana,
E’er to her be true.
She’s the pride of Indiana,
Hail to old I. U.”

Bess joined in the chorus, followed by Frank. The boys looked at each other in astonishment.

You have all wondered at the volume of sound that comes from the swelling throat of the captive canary; and you cannot have failed to be affected by the sweetness of tone that comes from the happy songsters of the forest as, drawn by the allurements of Spring, you wander to the open; nor can you have failed to marvel at the volume and reach of the human voice, when the singer is slight of form.

In Frank’s case it seemed that nature had neglected the frame in her endeavor to produce a masterpiece in the human voice.

Ralph was charmed with its richness and power, and when he had reached the end of the song, purposely began over again. But Frank, divining his motive, stopped singing, as does the nighthingale when observed.

Mr. Springer was announced.

Frank crossed the room eagerly and gave him her hand, saying: “I am so glad you’ve come. We have been singing, and you must join us.”

“Mr. Springer is our new neighbor,” explained the senior Mr. Henry.

Bess begged him to play, and he laughingly consented if Frank would sing. To the utter astonishment of Ralph, she readily consented.

Mr. Springer began to sing in a rich baritone voice, playing his own accompaniments. All joined in the refrain, except Ralph, who for some inexplicable reason had suddenly lost his voice and turned to join his father.

Barton turned toward him and grinned maliciously.

"Who is this man Springer?" Ralph inquired of his father.

"He is a student of the Boston School of Music, whose health has been undermined by hard study, and who is seeking an outdoor life at the instance of his physician. He is the nephew of our neighbor, Mrs. Hardin, who invited him to spend the Winter here. He has taken a great interest in Frank, and has undertaken to instruct her in music."

Ralph heartily wished him to the devil, but at the same time had to admit that the opportunity was a rare one for Frank. And so he laughed at his folly, and going over to Mr. Springer magnanimously gave him his hand and welcomed him to his home, adding:

"I trust you will do all you can for Miss Grogan."

"I fear my course of instruction will necessarily be short."

Ralph longed to tell him that he hoped so, but again forgetting self in the interest of Frank, said:

"Father tells me you will spend the Winter here."

"Yes, I didn't mean that I was going away. It is only the rudiments—the mere mechanical part that she needs instruction in. The art is already there.

She must soon be beyond me, when I hope to become the pupil."

Ralph frowned, and Mr. Springer continued:

"I hope to see her enter the Boston School."

"Not while you are there," thought Ralph, but he was immediately ashamed, and added aloud:

"I hope she will be able to go."

Ralph, while secretly disturbed by the presence of Springer, who must shortly be left on the ground, was never the less glad to see Frank happy again.

Mr. Springer was unable to sing very long on account of a shortness of breath that had lately come over him, and after a short time spent in the company, took his departure, after thanking Bess for an invitation to accompany them to the mines on the following day.

That night Bess confided a secret to Ralph: Frank had been attending the graded schools in Centreville. The suggestion had come from Frank, who was painfully aware of her deficiency in education and was anxious to repair it.

"I heartily concurred in the plan, and predict that she will make rapid progress," said Bess.

"It was a happy day that brought her to the clinic," said Ralph, as he left Bess to join Barton and his father.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE KIDNAPPED PRINCESS.

It was decided that the trip to the mines should be made on horseback. Frank purposely delayed the start until the arrival of the rural postman. She received two letters and her friends observed that she studied the writing long and intently before opening the envelope. She seemed to tremble and turn pale as she glanced at the contents, then hastily excusing herself, went to her room.

She appeared at the end of half an hour, her face plainly giving evidence of weeping, which she tried to overcome with a forced gaiety.

Once mounted, Bess, with Barton beside her, led the little cavalcade northward toward the hill country, where the mines were located. Frank rode one of the older horses. She had, under the instruction of Bess, overcome her fear, and though far from expert, rode well so long as her horse was quiet.

In order to answer a question from Bess, Mr. Springer rode forward, leaving Frank and Ralph alone.

"Oh, Mr. Henry," she began, "I was so upset this morning I could scarcely undertake the trip. I received a letter from mother."

"Is she well?" asked Ralph.

"Oh, yes, it is not the contents so much as the writing that disturbs me. It is in a strange hand, and still it is signed by Miss Barr. I compared the writing with other letters from Miss Barr and they are entirely different."

Ralph was truly surprised and not a little uneasy himself. He was already puzzled by Mrs. Grogan's disappearance from the hospital. He would have given a great deal to be able to solve the mystery, but he was careful to conceal his anxiety from Frank.

"You should not worry over that," he said. "Miss Barr has evidently been busy and requested one of her nurses to write for her."

"But Miss Barr's name is signed," persisted Frank.

"That is but natural," argued Ralph, since the arrangement was for Miss Barr to write. Whoever did it naturally signed her name. Miss Barr's name is the seal of genuineness."

"Here is the letter," said Frank.

Ralph took it eagerly, letting his horse come to a walk while he studied it closely. Here was a letter from her mother in a strange hand. Mrs. Grogan had mysteriously disappeared from the hospital, and Ralph knew that Miss Barr was holding Frank's letters, not knowing where to deliver them. Now a letter comes to Frank over Miss Barr's signature. There was evidently something wrong. There was a studied attempt on the part of someone to deceive, and yet what could be the motive? Ralph was greatly perplexed, and if the truth be known not a little

worried. The cause of his worry came not from intuition, as in Frank's case, but from the knowledge of facts which he was careful to conceal from her.

"You may read it," she said, observing that he was only studying the envelope.

"I was just trying to recall the writing. I have read the charts so often at the hospital that I am familiar with the writing of many of the nurses. This is undoubtedly Miss Clausen's writing," said Ralph, lying deliberately. "She is an intimate friend of Miss Barr's. Yes, I see it now. I was right in my explanation," and Ralph handed back the letter unread.

Frank searched his countenance to learn if he was trying to deceive her, but his smile reassured her, and they urged their horses into a canter in order to overtake the rest of the party.

Ralph thought much over this incident, and took the first opportunity to acquaint Barton with the news.

"Let us try a burst of speed, Barton," said Ralph, at the same time striking Barton's horse with his whip. Bess followed, but seeing that Frank was afraid, reined in and tried to call to the boys.

"Someone is meddling with her affairs," said Barton upon hearing of the letter, "and we must find out who it is."

"I grant that," said Ralph, "but how?"

"That I am unable to answer at present. I must have time to think about it."

"The poor girl is unhappy enough as it is without someone deliberately adding to her uneasiness.

I would like to catch the party responsible," said Ralph hotly. "Barton, Mrs. Grogan has been kidnapped!" Ralph added seriously.

Barton laughed heartily at the idea. "I can't imagine it," he said.

"Were you ever serious in your life?" asked Ralph solemnly.

"I don't recall an instance just now," he admitted.

"Well, make this an occasion. There is a design against Dr. Charts, and I must write to him at once. I wish I could get that letter from Frank without alarming her. If it were in the hands of a detective, Mrs. Grogan might be found."

"Perhaps we could pick her pocket," suggested Barton.

"Is that your best attempt at being serious?" queried Ralph, indignantly.

"Let's draw Springer into the plot and let him pull off the job, he's nimble fingered."

"Barton, you are a rascal!"

"No, I couldn't be serious enough for that."

"I'll plan it alone."

"I hope you don't get caught."

"There is the smoke from the 'tipple.' Let us wait for the rest or Frank will grow suspicious."

"She need be," laughed Barton.

"I took the trouble to telephone to the Superintendent," said Mr. Springer, when the party was reunited. "He promised to show us through."

The party arrived at the mines about ten o'clock and found the Superintendent engaged in the office

in conversation with a very old gentleman, who seemed to pay strict attention to every word of the Superintendent.

Imagine the surprise when grandfather Noodles was introduced to the party. He was very cordial in his greeting to Ralph, saying:

"Mr. Henry and I are well acquainted."

"These young people have come to inspect your mine," said Mr. Joyce, the Superintendent.

"Very good. We will accompany them. I was about to suggest going in. It seems very strange that I am a mine owner having never seen the inside of one."

"I was not aware that you were the owner of Hooper Mines," said Ralph.

"I have recently acquired the property," said Mr. Noodles, as he took Ralph's arm and started for the opening some hundred yards away. This is the first opportunity I have had to examine them, though I have owned them for some months."

Ralph suddenly remembered that the former owner had been held responsible by the Grand Jury for the death from suffocation of a number of miners.

"Mr. Noodles," began Ralph, "I know that you are no longer in the case of Dr. Charts, still perhaps you may take enough interest to give me a word of advice."

"To be sure, my dear boy. What can I do for you?"

Ralph then told him of the disappearance of Mrs. Grogan and of the letter, and related touchingly the

unhappiness it was causing Frank. Mr. Noodles was very thoughtful, and asked if it were possible for him to see the letter.

Ralph explained the difficulty.

Mr. Noodles expressed great astonishment when he learned that the young lady to whom he had been presented was Mrs. Grogan's daughter.

Ralph said that the matter might be arranged if Mr. Noodles would remain over night as his guest.

"Impossible," said he. "I have been down here two days, and must be in Louisville to-night."

"Will you then return with us for lunch? I will drive you to Centreville in time for the evening train."

"Yes, I will do that, if you will arrange for the young lady to ride in my carriage."

"I think that I can arrange that," said Ralph.

The party was now ready for the ride down the shaft into the mine. Bess and Barton took the first car; Mr. Noodles, Mr. Springer and the Superintendent the second, while Frank and Ralph entered the third. Frank was badly frightened as the car began its steep descent into the darkness, and clung nervously to Ralph's arm. When they reached the level of the mine floor a mule was hitched to the car to take them down the main entry. Ralph now opened the subject by saying that Mr. Noodles would return with them for lunch, and that he wished for her to ride in the carriage with Mr. Noodles.

"Oh, no; I can ride my horse. I am not the least

bit tired, and I enjoy riding horseback so much."

"But when we get out of here you will be greatly fatigued, and then—well—the carriage will be more comfortable."

"And let Bess ride horseback? Impossible!"

"But, Frank, do this for me."

"Why?" she asked in surprise. "Don't you want——" And then a great lump came into her throat and she faltered.

"No, it isn't that. It's about the letter," blurted Ralph.

He observed the terrified expression as the car turned from the "main east" into the "first north," where they found the party waiting for them.

They were compelled to forego any further conversation, while Mr. Joyce explained the "veins" and the "leads." Frank observed that the mine was lighted with electricity as they moved along toward where there was a great rattle of machinery.

"We mine mostly by electricity," explained the Superintendent. "This machine mines the coal very rapidly."

"What young mules you use," said Frank, innocently.

"That one just starting with a load has been here for nine years," said Mr. Joyce.

"Don't they get any bigger?" she asked, in surprise.

"No. We call them bank mules, because they are small and fit for use only in a coal bank."

"How do you get them up at night?"

"We don't take them up."

"Oh, the poor things! Don't they ever get any grass?"

"Yes, occasionally we give them a holiday. We blindfold them and back them into a car and haul them up as we would a load of coal."

The party now visited an old part of the mine that had been exhausted. As they crept among the wooden supports that kept the roof from caving in, Ralph took Frank's arm, and under pretence of guiding her footsteps, drew her behind the rest.

"You must not be alarmed about that letter," he began. "Mr. Noodles, as you perhaps know, formerly had charge of our case, and, as he tells me, is still deeply interested. I related your fears to him, and he laughed, saying that they were groundless. He said that if you would ride back with him, he could dispel any uneasiness that you might feel."

"Oh, thank you, Ralph—I mean Mr. Henry."

"No, no, Ralph is my name. Why shouldn't you call me Ralph? You know, I am a brother to you now."

Somehow her eyes were inexpressibly sad as she said:

"Oh, so you are! And such a good one, too! I was mean to suspect you of deceiving me."

"You will ride with Mr. Noodles?"

"What will the rest say?"

"Leave that to me."

When the party emerged from the ground, Ralph said in alarm: "Frank, you are ill. You are faint. Mr. Springer, will you mind running to the office for a glass of water?"

That individual was off as if he were in the country for athletic training rather than for his health.

"It is the bad air of the mines," said Mr. Noodles. "Mr. Joyce, look well into the condition of the fans. If necessary, install new ones. My young lady, you shall ride in my carriage. How fortunate I should have one with me."

Frank laughed, but sat down on a boulder and leaned her head against Bess, who looked at Ralph in alarm.

"Is she real sick?" she inquired anxiously.

"No. She is all right," said Barton. "Look at her color."

He didn't finish, for he received a vicious kick on the shins from Ralph, who said immediately:

"The face is flushed because the heart action is too strong."

A warning look at the astonished Barton told him to keep quiet.

Frank smiled faintly, opened her eyes and said: "I am better now, Where is my horse?"

"Turn Billy loose. He'll follow," said Ralph.

Frank protested.

"Young lady, I am the doctor here," said Ralph sternly.

Mr. Springer, returning in great haste, spilled the water and ran back again in great excitement. He held the glass nervously to Frank's lips, and was compelled to sit down for want of breath. It was some minutes before he could swing himself into the saddle.

Frank acquiesced and was carried off like a beau-

tiful princess in the chariot of an Ogre; abducted right before the eyes of her friends.

"Bess, you ride ahead with Mr. Springer," said Ralph. "I want to apologize to Barton for kicking his shins."

"All right. But mind, no state secrets."

"They won't be secrets long," he rejoined, with a knowing wink.

Once started, Ralph related all that had occurred, and Barton laughed loud and long at the abduction.

They had pulled up to a walk and were presently overtaken by the carriage. The boys wheeled their horses out of the road and faced, one on either side, lifting their hats in military salute; and, as the carriage passed between them, Barton said:

"Most noble princess, a knight would rescue you."

And the white-haired man, catching the spirit of youth, placed his hand over his fair captive's mouth, and shook his fist at the horseman. And Frank, carrying out her part, pretended to struggle and held out her hands appealingly to the knight who had addressed her. And then, as the carriage wheeled around the corner, with the old man urging the team, they heard his voice mingled with Frank's in joyous laughter,—voices from the two extremes of life meeting and blending,—inspiring the confidence of youth and binding age indissolubly to her interests.

When they reached home, Frank was in excellent spirits. Grandfather Noodles had so skilfully conducted the interview as to secure the letter. The

last doubt in regard to Ralph and Dr. Charts vanished when the old man placed his hand on her shoulder and said:

"Daughter, dismiss that from your mind. Trust implicitly to me and I will keep an eagle eye on the case."

Frank was truly happy and when she alighted from the carriage, rosy and smiling, Barton bended his knee, and as Frank gave him her hand, he kissed the tips of her fingers—to the utter amazement of Bess, who blushed deeply and turned instinctively to Ralph, as if she expected her brother to chastise him for his audacity. Ralph's face was radiant and Bess could make nothing of it, until Grandfather Noodles, bowing low, said with a merry twinkle in his eye: "Most noble knight, the princess has won my heart and reformed her captor; and so I bow to the wishes of the lady and restore her to you. Take her, and, as you fear the vengeful wrath of an Ogre, never trust her from your sight again."

"What's all of this?" demanded Bess.

"Barton, you're in bad," said Ralph, laughing. "I reckon you will get serious once in your life. It will, indeed, take a state secret to square you."

For the first time Ralph was sensible of the rare beauty of Frank.

CHAPTER XIV.

A RURAL INSECT.

The busy bee of gossip was already abroad in the land. Mrs. Hardin, the aunt of Mr. Springer, called upon Mrs. Watson, her nearest neighbor but one, and soon took up the subject of the Henrys and their protege.

"Clarence says she is very beautiful and has wonderful talent." This, she thought, would wring some expression of opinion from Mrs. Watson. But that lady was guarded and merely said:

"They do say she's powerful good lookin'."

Mrs. Hardin didn't care to offer any criticism until she knew how Mrs. Watson stood, and Mrs. Watson was just as anxious to sound Mrs. Hardin.

"Mr. Springer seems to take a great interest in her," cautiously ventured Mrs. Watson. She would put out a feeler.

"Yes; it's her musical talent, I suppose. Clarence Springer would go into ecstasies over anything that could sing, no matter who they were or what they came from." But, fearing lest she had said too much, added immediately:

"But the Henrys are too sensible to take any one into their home, unless they knew who they were."

"I have always thought so, but—"

"But what?" urged Mrs. Hardin, eagerly.

"Oh, it's all right, I guess, but I did think it a little strange, still—". Mrs. Hardin's ears were drinking in every word eagerly, watching for enough evidence to base an opinion upon.

"Still," continued Mrs. Watson, "not so strange either, since Ralph knows her so well. She must come of a good family. She dresses well and seems refined." Mrs. Hardin could scarcely restrain herself any longer, so much did her secret burn her soul.

"I am not so sure of her family," said she, with a knowing look.

Mrs. Watson was about to make a remark, but not feeling sure of Mrs. Hardin, let the opportunity slip.

Mrs. Hardin now gave up the attempt to draw her out, and so bidding Mrs. Watson "Good Morning," she hastened to the home of Miss Shipp, a maiden lady of some forty years or more. Here she was more successful.

Miss Shipp was very anxious to learn all she could of that young lady. Mrs. Hardin had a relative in Louisville and had herself been reared there, so she had taken the trouble to write a letter of inquiry. Her painstaking had that morning been rewarded by a letter inclosing a newspaper clipping, wherein it was stated that:

"Mr. Alfred Henry and family had returned to their country home near Centreville, taking with them Miss Grogan, who, it will be remembered, is the young lady whose father was murdered by Dr.

Charts, and for which Ralph Henry has been indicted as an accessory."

All this information was given over to the greedy ears of Miss Shipp, who asked to borrow the clipping.

"I may let you see the letter some day," said Mrs. Hardin, temptingly. And before she left, Miss Shipp had read from the letter that:

"The general impression in Louisville is that the Henrys are trying to spirit away a witness that may prove valuable to their son when his trial comes up.

"Yours affectionately,
"Vic."

"He's my nephew," said Mrs. Hardin.

And thus the story reached the vicinity of Centreville. In three days' time it had penetrated to the Centreville Courier and the editor, appreciating the value of the news item, published the story.

This article was a crushing blow to Frank and served the added purpose of giving license to all the guarded tongues in the community. Wasn't it in the paper? When Mrs. Hardin and Mrs. Watson next met, their tongues wagged without restraint.

There was a distinct decline in the popularity of the Henrys among that class that made pretense of social equality. Still none had the hardihood to show open slight to these recognized leaders of society.

Miss Shipp called upon Mrs. Henry in order to warn and enlighten her as to Frank's past. She

hoped that she wouldn't think she was interfering for it was no affair of hers, but she thought that as a Christian and a friend it was her duty to let her know who this young lady really was. "That is, indeed, if you should not happen to know. There are many adventurers, you know, and 'we all' can't be too careful of whom we take into our homes. You have a daughter, you know, and then it would be very unfortunate, indeed, if your son should—"

Mrs. Henry's patience was exhausted at this point and she interrupted the good spinster rather abruptly by telling her that no one knew more of the young lady's past than she did.

Miss Shipp pretended to be horrified, and exclaimed in a tone that wounded deeply:

"An' you knowed it all the time? Well, I guess you've got good reasons." She drew herself up to a miraculous height, with all the dignity of which she was capable and perfectly annihilated Mrs. Henry with a look as she said:

"One don't even know the people they've associated with the longest."

She encountered Frank as she passed out of the gate and pretended not to have seen her.

"Oh, Miss Shipp, I am so glad to see you."

She was within three feet of the moving statue when it seemed to suddenly revolve on its pedestal and paralyze her with a withering look of scorn. Then, with her indignant nose a trifle higher, she sprang into the saddle and flew to Mrs. Hardin's.

Mrs. Henry stood at the window smiling at the retreating piece of Christian charity, until she ob-

served the scene just described, when she ran down to meet Frank, whose eyes were filled with tears as she turned toward the house.

Seeing her coming, Frank kept her face averted, but Mrs. Henry, observing, passed her arm around her and led the way to the house.

Not a word was spoken, nor was it necessary. Nothing could be more eloquent than the exhibition of confidence and love. Nor could Frank help contrasting it with the actions of Miss Shipp.

Mrs. Henry thought a great deal about this occurrence, and as she observed from day to day a growing, spreading coldness on the part of her friends, she began to have misgivings as to the propriety of her action in taking in this homeless and friendless girl. Finally she unburdened herself to her husband, after the good pair had retired for the night. Mr. Henry listened gravely, and then said:

"My dear, whatever the conditions are, the question should be settled to-night. You must take a positive stand and not leave yourself open to every passing remark. If you remain open to conviction it will only increase and prolong your worry. I hope you will decide this question for yourself. You are the mother, and the first to be satisfied. Take a stand, then, for the girl or against her. Weigh carefully all sides, and if then you are still unable to decide, would you be willing to leave it to me?"

Mrs. Henry was silent, and he added:

"From my decision there will be no appeal."

"I cannot altogether reconcile my heart and my head," said she.

"Trust to the former, my dear; it is not subject to change, and will compel the head to conform."

She looked at him and smiled.

"Is it, then, settled?" he inquired.

"It is," she said, firmly.

"I didn't think you would make a mistake," he said, affectionately.

"But it is making Frank very unhappy."

"You must do all in your power to overcome it. It will not be for long. I had a conference with the elder Mr. Noodles, and he says that if we will give her a home for a short time, other arrangements will be made for her."

"Do you think," asked Mrs. Henry timidly, "that—that—we could give her up?"

Mr. Henry smiled and said:

"I fear your recent struggle was hardly a 'battle in the dark.'"

"She has come to be very dear to me. And then—Bess——"

"And Ralph," said her husband.

And thus the question of allegiance to this lonely girl was irrevocably settled.

In another room, a different scene was being enacted. Bess had noted the increasing sadness of Frank, and after retiring, had thought so much of it that she stole quietly into her room and found Frank crying softly, with her face buried in her pillow.

She had fully decided that she would return to

the city. She had perceived the changed manners of the people she met. So far as they concerned herself, she didn't care, but to be the direct cause of annoyance to her benefactors gave her untold anguish. The article in the Centreville Courier told her too plainly the cause. Its apology for her presence stung her to the quick. She had pride, lots of it, and admired the quality in other people. Wounded pride was to her the most terrible punishment in the world, and she had caused the pride of the Henrys to be wounded repeatedly since her arrival. Why had she discovered it so late? She must not allow it to continue.

And thus she poured out her soul to Bess, to whom her inmost thoughts had come to be an open page.

"You just can't go back," said Bess. And then came an inspiration to her that showed her a way out of this great difficulty. Had she undertaken deliberately to plan an escape, Bess felt that she must have failed; but there comes on rare occasions a light from beyond that illuminates no matter how dark the way.

"You must stay, if only to prove that they are mistaken," whispered Bess, hardly knowing what she said. She seemed to be only the mouthpiece for the spoken words.

Frank stopped crying instantly and her face lost its forlorn expression. She gazed intently into the face of her friend for an instant, and then determination was depicted on the countenance of each. Then, with an almost hysterical laugh, Bess caught

Frank in her arms and said in her characteristic spirit:

"Frank, we'll show 'em."

At breakfast Mrs. Henry was astonished at the gaiety of the girls. All of Frank's sorrow had disappeared, and ever so slight a qualm rippled the placid surface of Mrs. Henry's conscience, until Bess told her secretly of the night before and of Frank's determination to overcome the prejudice.

Strange to relate, Frank made a confidant of Mr. Springer in this matter, and more than once Relph's spirits were low as he observed the pair deeply absorbed in mutual confidences. It was during one of these interviews that Mr. Springer gave Frank a piece of worldly advice.

"If you wish to break down this foolish prejudice quickly, sing in the choir. You may break up the choir at first, but others will flock to your standard. That, I should say, is this community's most vulnerable point. Once established in the choir, your voice will compel admiration. The minister will champion your cause, and when that occurs, the members will fall over each other to make your acquaintance."

"Or pull my hair," chimed in Frank.

"A public concert will hook the editor," said Mr. Springer, upon whom Frank's remark was completely lost.

Frank laughed heartily as she said:

"Will you help me, Mr. Springer?"

"Yes, if you will let me be your manager."

It was thus agreed, and Frank ran off to find Bess, but meeting Ralph, she blushed and hesitated.

"Have you seen Bess?" she inquired.

"She and Barton have gone for a ride."

"Won't you come and join Mr. Springer and I?" she asked.

"No, two's company," and Ralph turned and striking his boot viciously with his riding whip, strode sullenly off to the stables.

Frank watched him silently for a moment, and then a great lump came into her throat and she hurried to her room, forgetting entirely that she had left Mr. Springer in the library.

Frank felt sick and faint. She didn't know just exactly what was the matter. Jealousy was a thing unknown to her, consequently she was unable to interpret Ralph's actions, except that he had joined the crowd against her. Here, then, at the outset of her campaign, she had met an enemy that she could not defy.

At dinner time she was too ill to leave her room, and when Bess came to inquire, begged to be left alone. It was not until supper that she appeared, and then was very quiet. Her reproachful eyes searched Ralph's face and caused that gentleman no end of discomfort. When he had learned that Frank had neglected Mr. Springer after his exhibition of petty jealousy, he was deeply conscience stung. He lost no opportunity, therefore, to see Frank and make apology. Ralph was not of a sordid disposition, and the mood of the morning surprised him quite as much as it had Frank. She was wonderfully relieved to find that Ralph was not arrayed against her. These fears she confided to him, as

well as to tell him of her plans, and laughed over the fact that she was to have a manager.

"I predict," said Ralph, "that we will see a lively exhibition of the manager managed."

The time at last arrived when Barton and Ralph must return to their duties in the city.

The girls drove them to the station, and Frank said to Ralph as the time for departure drew near:

"You will write to me, won't you? You know you are a brother to me now."

There was a peculiar emphasis on "brother" that disturbed Ralph. Then he thought of the conversation at the mines and realized that Frank was learning rapidly the ways of the world.

CHAPTER XV.

AN UNSOPHISTICATED MESSENGER.

Early Christmas evening the senior Mr. Noodles went to his office and, entering by a side door, lighted a cigar and took a seat where he could overhear any conversation in the next room. He had not long to wait before Vic entered and sat down to wait for Kittie. He soon heard her step and went to the outer door to meet her.

"Good evening, Kittie. On time, as usual."

"Yes, Mr. Noodles, I promised you to come."

They entered Vic's private office, and Kittie said:

"Mr. Noodles, I don't wish to offend you and hope you will not feel it so, but I must return your present."

"No, not by any means," said Vic.

"Yes," she continued. "I showed it to mother and told her who gave it to me, and she said that under no condition could we accept anything from you. I pressed her for a reason, and she said that it was unnecessary, but that I must return the watch at once."

"Kittie," said Vic, "why is it your grandmother dislikes me so much?"

"I'm sure I don't know, Mr. Noodles."

Vic took the watch and placed it in his pocket, and

as he did so Kittie burst into tears. Vic pulled his chair close to hers, and taking her hand, said:

"Never mind, Kittie. I will keep the watch for you. I will deposit it in a safety vault and give you the key, so if you are ever free to accept it, you will only have to unlock the vault."

"I hope that you won't feel that I don't appreciate it," said Kittie sincerely. "I am under so many obligations to you now for getting me out of that trouble."

"There, now, Kittie; don't mention that. It is exceedingly disagreeable to me. The next time I have a case of false arrest for petty thieving in a department store, I'll make it hot for the proprietor." Vic brought his fist down on the desk with so much force that, a second later, he instinctively rubbed it to relieve the pain.

"Oh, dear me! Did you hurt it, Mr. Noodles?" asked Kittie timidly.

Vic continued, ignoring the question:

"Contemptible wretch! Please promise me, Kittie, that you will never mention this subject again."

"Well, you know he apologized," she ventured.

"Apologized, the devil! Yes, after the other party returned the umbrella and confessed to having taken it."

"I don't believe that it ever would have been returned if you had not taken the interest in me that you did. And then I should have always been thought guilty, and goodness knows what would have become of me."

"Let us change the subject. I get angry every time I think of it. Tell me of Mrs. Grogan, Kittie."

Kittie overcame her emotions with a mighty effort. The watch was the first and only thing Mr. Noodles had ever given her, and though she mistrusted his motives, she was powerless to refuse. Then, too, he had shown her some tenderness, and she was bewildered.

"I asked her the question as you told me, and this is her story."

Vic here took tablet and pencil and prepared to copy.

"Yes, I remember the trouble John had at Dr. Charts' school, and for all I know, maybe it was with Dr. Charts. Maybe that is the reason that he was so furious when he saw the doctor that night. And maybe that is the reason, too, that he came armed. I never did know just exactly what happened. John was drinking one morning very hard, and went to the clinic, where he had some trouble and was arrested. Mr. Noodles got him out of it. You see, the day that John was killed I took Frank to Dr. Charts' clinic, and she refused to go before the class, so I had to bring her home again. There was a young man who was very kind to us. He told me that he would call at the house to see her. I did not think to tell him that John would be furious and that he must come during the day, when John was always away from home. My husband was drinking more than usual that day, and when he found out that Frank had refused to go before the class he became furious and was going to beat her. She was

sick, and I tried to stop him, when the young man and Dr. Charts, that John didn't like anyway, came into the room. He ordered them out, and struck me because I was holding the door so he could not get into Frank's room. I did not know what happened then until I heard the shot just as I was coming to. Then they took us all to the hospital, where John died."

"And then, Mr. Noodles, she asked me how I came to nurse him there, and I didn't know what to say. Finally I told her I went there to learn to be a trained nurse, but found the work so hard that I gave it up. Then she seemed perfectly satisfied."

"Kittie, you're a trump! That was just the very thing for you to have told her. By the way, you may tell her it was Dr. Charts that had Grogan arrested for a disturbance at school."

"Was it really, Mr. Noodles?"

"Yes. I defended him and got the case dismissed."

Here Grandfather Noodles' pencil got busy, and after he had written rapidly for a few minutes in the notebook, he placed it in his pocket and became attentive again.

"Now, Kittie, I wish you would ask her if John didn't tell her something about Dr. Charts threatening him, and be careful and remember just what she says. Did you know that Ralph Henry had met Frank Grogan before this? And had met and had words with her father while they were walking along the river front?"

"Why, no; I didn't suppose he had ever seen her before."

"You see," said Vic, "there is more in this case than appears upon the surface, and it is my duty to probe the thing to the bottom, no matter whom it hurts. I want you to come and see me again two weeks from to-night, and in the meantime if you hear anything, don't hesitate to let me know."

Vic attempted to put his arm about her waist, but she quickly and positively disengaged herself and moved toward the door, at the same time saying:

"Mr. Noodles, I hope you won't feel hurt about the watch."

"No, Kittie, that is all right, provided you will accept the key."

Vic showed her out of the building, and then came back. The elder Noodles was preparing to leave, but hearing the returning footsteps, again took his seat. Vic entered, sat down to his desk and began writing. Between long intervals of the scratching of the pen on paper, Mr. Noodles heard a few disjointed remarks, such as "putty," "easy," and finally:

"When Kittie and I get through with Mrs. Grogan, she won't know what has happened."

Grandfather Noodles muttered through his teeth:

"And when I get through with you, young man, you'll wonder what has happened."

"So long as Kittie doesn't get wise to my motives," continued Vic, "all will be well. Should she see into my little scheme, however, I fear she would refuse to be a party to it."

He then arose, turned out the light and left.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE VILLAGE CHOIR.

We will return to the village of Centreville to see how Mr. Springer is managing the campaign for Frank in her effort to restore to popularity the people whom she loved so well, and whom she felt were suffering humiliation for her sake.

"Law sakes alive! If she hain't got inter the choir!" gasped Miss Shipp, as she was startled by the sight of Frank seated at the end of the organ—the seat which had been occupied for twenty-five years by Mrs. Jordan, the faithful soprano of the village choir.

"It's a livin' an' a burnin' shame," she whispered, none too low, to Mrs. Watson. "Mrs. Jordan has sung in that 'ere choir as long as I can remember; an' now to be ousted by that upstart! Ugh! She thinks she can sing."

"Have you ever heard her?" asked Mrs. Watson.

"No, an' I don't intend to nuther."

The Rev. Mr. Dobbs was reading the text of the morning:

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if

there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, THINK ON THESE THINGS."

Mrs. Hardin now turned and nodded to Miss Shipp. Miss Shipp nodded to Mrs. Roach, who in turn raised her eyebrows to Mrs. Watson. Then Miss Shipp's eyes began a systematic search of the house, to learn if Mrs. Jordan were present.

"Now I rec'on the Henrys is satisfied," said she, as she learned that Mrs. Jordan was absent.

"Clarence Springer's done that, though you needn't tell Mrs. Hardin I said so," volunteered Mrs. Watson. "He ain't been to church but once since he's been here, because he says he can't stand Mrs. Jordan's voice."

"An' if he ain't a-leadin' the choir!" exclaimed Miss Shipp, bringing her hands together in the attitude of prayer, as the choir arose for the "anthem."

Then the awful stillness of the church was disturbed by the swish of starched petticoats as Miss Shipp edged out of the pew and marched down the centre aisle, her face the personification of tempestuous indignation. Without a side glance, and with the set purpose of avenging the insult to Mrs. Jordan, she swept majestically through the green doors and out.

There was a titter among some of the girls present, and then Mrs. Watson signalled to Mrs. Hardin and Mrs. Tabb, and led the bolt.

"Keep your seat, Mary," said Deacon Roach, as his wife arose to join in the movement.

"An' are you goin' to sit here an' let Mrs. Jordan——"

Then Frank faltered and was utterly unable to begin, as at that moment she heard a slap and the words rang clear to all in the house:

"Let loose of my clothes, Jim Roach. You ain't no better'n she is."

Deacon Roach had taken hold of his wife's skirt, and after pulling her into her seat, snugly tucked it under his leg and held her captive; hence the slap on his bald head, which served only to make him blink his eyes a couple of times and never waver in his gaze at the minister.

The organist once more began the prelude, when the green doors again swung, this time inward, and Mrs. Jordan came down the aisle, nodding pleasantly to Frank, as she took the seat vacated by Miss Shipp.

Frank's face lighted, and as her clear, sweet tones filled the little chapel the white-haired minister was seen to bow his head, and, a moment later, to quietly slip his immaculate handkerchief from his tail pocket and surreptitiously apply it to his eyes. Then the congregation remembered when the minister's only child, a young lady of about Frank's age, was the only young member of the choir. Then a sob came from the pulpit, and as it reached Frank, her voice became deliciously tremulous as it gave expression to the conflict of emotions in her soul.

There was a stir in the gallery overhead, and the audience craned their necks to observe, peering over the gallery rail, a pair of swollen red eyes set in a flushed face, with stubby beard and hair long and



"Frank's face lighted, and her clear, sweet tones filled the chapel."—page 156.

unkempt. It was the first time any of the congregation had ever observed the sexton awake during service. His hand was augmenting the pinnacle of his ear as he drank in the delicious tones of the young girl.

"I never heerd sich singin' in all my born days," testified Deacon Roach after the meeting, as he walked slowly home with a neighbor, his wife having set out at a pace that defied all competition.

That good soul was in a conflict of emotions, of which there was a jumbled mixture of anger, chagrin and astonishment.

Mrs. Jordan edged her way to the organ, and taking Frank's hands in hers, brought the crimson to her cheeks as she praised extravagantly and sincerely her singing. This had been observed by Mrs. Roach, and while she was secretly glad she had remained to be a witness to it, she could not nevertheless forgive her husband for his interference.

Mrs. Jordan was one of those suffering mortals, who for half a lifetime had unselfishly sacrificed her time and energies to sing in the choir, because there was none who could or would take her place. In Winter and Summer, rain or shine, for twenty-five years, she had never missed a choir practice or a service, and so, if her voice was a little cracked, it was all the more honorable. Her friends vainly imagined that she would jealously guard her rights against all usurpers. But however often that may be the case, certain it was that in this instance it came as a welcome relief to a sensible and overworked member. Frank had reluctantly undertaken

to fill the place at the earnest solicitation of Mrs. Jordan herself.

Many times during the succeeding weeks Mrs. Henry was made to feel the result of her experiment. She had not foreseen these things, when, out of the goodness of her heart, and the love for her children, she had consented to the arrangement. She now began to study the situation more closely. It had never occurred to her that it might become a perilous undertaking, that her neighbors might question her motives or that the family might suffer as a consequence. The more she pondered over it, however, the more firm she became in her conviction that she was doing right. Then, too, the good sense of the girl herself, her refreshing unselfishness, together with her pure, almost idolatrous worship of her benefactress, drew Mrs. Henry to her with a mother's affection. The thousand little things thought of and executed by Frank, having for their object the comfort and happiness of some member of the family, made Mrs. Henry insensible of the many slights to which she was daily subjected.

Frank had many misgivings about taking Mrs. Jordan's place, but as long as that individual insisted and befriended her, she thought there could not be any harm.

The following Sunday saw a great falling off in the attendance at the morning service, but in the evening every young fellow in the village was there, some of whom had never been inside a church. And so the good Mr. Dobbs, while he missed several familiar faces, observed many that were new. At

evening services there came to be a "right smart sprinklin' o' Baptists," as Deacon Roach expressed it.

Frank and Bess became frequent visitors at the parsonage, and the pastor, learning the story of Frank's past life and future ambitions, volunteered to instruct her in the rudiments of the classics.

One of Frank's earliest and staunchest supporters was the rural postman, who defended her from farmhouse to farmhouse whenever the opportunity presented.

"You'd a-thought Si Jinks 'd be shinin' up to that gal, the way he talks about her," commented the proprietor of a cross roads general store, where Si stopped daily to feed his horse and eat his lunch.

The second week in January was the date of an annual dinner given at the home of the county judge. To this event the elite of the county were always invited. Heretofore the feeling against the Henrys had been but deep muttering and distant rumble, but now, the judge being away on legal business, his wife set the example of open revolt, and as a consequence (could it be possible) the Henrys were not invited. There was a vague notion among some that the Henrys had in some way, not well understood, brought disgrace upon the fair name of the community. Few understood the real conditions, and those who had never seen the cause of all this furor imagined that the girl must be something terrible. Invariably the antipathy vanished upon sight of Frank, but that opportunity, thanks to the conventionalities that protect society, was not often presented.

Mrs. Henry was truly and deeply wounded at the slight. She was a woman who esteemed the good opinion of her neighbors, but her heart always went out to the girl in every contest where the balance hung between Frank and public opinion.

Stranger than all this, Mrs. Jordan was snubbed on this occasion. For ten years there had existed in the little church a determined anti-Jordan element, and rumor went, though I am loath to believe it, that Miss Shipp was their leader. When, however, their wishes were at last to be gratified, they suddenly manifested the most wonderful sympathy for, and constituted themselves the guardians of, the rights of Mrs. Jordan. This was but the coalition of forces, as they thought, against a common enemy. But when Mrs. Jordan championed the cause of Frank, she was promptly marked for the slaughter.

By the last of January, there had occurred a split in the Ladies' Foreign Missionary Society, the Woman's Literary Club was disrupted, the Henrys were ostracized from society, and every child in the community was in love with Frank. It appeared to her that herein lay the avenue of escape.

The editor of the Centreville Courier called at the Henry home expressly to meet and form an opinion of Frank, and, as a result, had written and printed a satirical article under the caption, "Christian Charity," which promptly cost him a number of subscriptions.

It was at this time after an evening of music, participated in by Mrs. Jordan, that Mr. Springer in a fit of facetiousness, made formal resignation as

manager of the campaign. He had been made the subject of much good-natured bantering on the part of Bess and Mrs. Jordan, who accused him of mixing things hopelessly.

CHAPTER XVII.

KITTY BOTH IMPARTS AND RECEIVES INFORMATION.

Kate Lowry, or Kittie, as she was familiarly known, had lived on Campbell street near the Ohio River since early childhood. What her antecedents were, no one in the neighborhood knew. Little was known of the old lady with whom she lived, except that she was the grandmother of Kittie, but Kittie always called her "Mother." Kittie's last name was "Lowry," at least she was so enrolled in school. Her grandmother was known as "Granny" Lowry, but no one attempted to explain the coincidence in names. Any inquiry into her past was promptly checked by Mrs. Lowry by a change in the conversation. She had moved into the neighborhood and had lived there, making her living with her needle and supporting Kittie until she was able to earn something. Of late years, however, her mother's health had been so bad that Kittie was compelled to furnish the entire living for the two. She managed to get through the graded schools, and one year in high school, when her whole time became taken up with the serious problem of furnishing her mother and herself with the necessities of life. Kittie had often asked about her grandfather, but had invariably been told that he died as the result of

an accident. When she reached home on Christmas night her mother asked her at once about the watch.

"I returned it, mother, as you wished."

The old lady took Kittie's hand, and said:

"Some day I will tell you why I objected."

"Why not to-night, mother?"

"Not yet, child," she replied.

Mrs. Grogan had prepared their evening meal from what was left from the Christmas dinner which Kittie had provided. They assisted the old lady to the table, and Kittie served the plates.

"Dr. Potts was here," said Mrs. Grogan.

"What did he say, mother?"

"Oh, the same old thing. He told me that I was worn out, and that you couldn't fix an old wagon forever. He told me that I didn't have long to live; just as if I did not know that already. He said that I would hasten the end by my exertions, just as if my exercise wasn't my life. Some doctors seem to take a delight in telling a person they haven't long to live."

"Oh, never mind, mother. Dr. Potts talks too much. Won't you let me get another physician for you?"

"No, child," she replied. "I don't think it is necessary. Dr. Potts is right. I am beyond repairing, and it would only be a useless outlay of money."

"Mother, dear, please let me get another physician. I have begged you so long; you forget me. What will become of me after you are gone?" Kittie's eyes filled with tears and she went to her

grandmother's chair, and putting her arms about her neck, said:

"Please, mother, you will let me call Dr. Charts or Dr. Emerson; won't you?"

"We'll see, Kittie; there now, you must not cry. Be brave, dear; you have learned to take care of yourself, and I have no fear for you. I am only an encumbrance. I have lived in sorrow too long already. There has been nothing but bitterness in my cup and the sooner it is ended the better. May the Lord spare you the sorrow I have known."

Kittie took her seat and the meal was finished in silence. She battled bravely with the tears she could scarce restrain. When supper was over Kittie and Mrs. Grogan assisted the old lady, who was very feeble, to her bed, and, after undressing her, saw that she was comfortable, then kissing her, left to help Mrs. Grogan with the work. As soon as she and Mrs. Grogan were alone, Kittie said:

"Mrs. Grogan, did your daughter ever meet Mr. Henry before you saw him at the college?"

"No, sure; and she never saw the young man until that morning."

"Are you sure?" asked Kittie, with an air of importance, as if she had private and reliable information to the contrary.

"When could she ever meet the young man and me not know about it? What put that idea in your head?"

"Didn't Mr. Grogan ever say a word about it to you?" asked Kittie.

"Divil a word did he ever say, but he might have

knowed, for all I know. He wasn't given to talking much to me?"

"Well, Mrs. Grogan, Frank knew this young man before you had the trouble."

Mrs. Grogan stopped and, placing her hand on her hip, stood looking at Kittie, as much as to say:

"Well, go on; I'm listening."

"Yes," continued Kittie; "they were acquainted, and one day Mr. Grogan met her and Mr. Henry walking along the river bank. He had some words with Mr. Henry and took Frank home with him."

"Well, well," said Mrs. Grogan, "an' I never knowed it. Maybe that was the reason John was so mad when he saw him in the house. John was awful when anybody even talked to Frank—always was ever since she came to live with us, and after Mr. Noodles tried to take her away, though he didn't seem to care anything for her, either."

It was Kittie's time to stare.

"Ever since she came to live with you," she repeated slowly. "Then she is not your daughter."

"We adopted her. You see, Kittie, we never tell anything about that, for I didn't mean to tell you."

"And how did Mr. Noodles try to get her away from you?"

"It was the old man—old man Noodles," she said.

Kittie heard her mother calling and ran to her room. She found the old lady gasping for breath.

"Help, help me up," she said, feebly.

Kittie raised and propped her up in bed with pillows, then ran to the cupboard and returned with some whisky which she gave to her. As soon as the

old lady was in an upright position, she began to breathe easier. Kittie had seen her mother in many of these "spells," as she called them, and was not alarmed; however, she put on a shawl and went to a neighboring telephone and called a physician. Hurrying back to the house she told her mother that she had telephoned for Dr. Charts, explained the circumstances to him and asked him if he would come to see her. She made no reply, but went to sleep sitting upright in bed. Kittie went into the next room then to talk with Mrs. Grogan. She was anxious to hear the rest of the story about Mr Noodles. As the name came into her mind, Kittie stopped short and, placing her hand over her mouth, said:

"Oh, I forgot."

What she forgot was that Vic Noodles had cautioned her not to let anyone know where Mrs. Grogan was, and she had just sent for Dr. Charts.

"I suppose he is afraid of some one trying to influence her; that's the only reason he could have. He knows as long as she is with me she won't be influenced in the case, but it's Dr. Chart's case," she added aloud; "I must get her to bed."

"Mrs. Grogan," said Kittie, on entering the room, "the doctor is coming, but you do not need to stay up. I will wait until he comes." She was dying to question her further, but she was just as anxious to prevent Dr. Charts seeing her, so she subdued her curiosity out of friendship for Vic Noodles, and hustled Mrs. Grogan off to bed.

"Who told you," asked Mrs. Grogan, "that Frank knew Henry?"

Kittie was astonished; she wasn't prepared for the question, so she pretended not to hear, but Mrs. Grogan repeated it, and had evidently decided to wait for an answer; so Kittie said:

"Frank told me at the hospital the evening her father—I mean Mr. Grogan—died."

"Funny I didn't know it," said Mrs. Grogan, as she took the lamp and went to her room.

Kittie went to sit by her mother until the doctor arrived. She kept thinking of Frank Grogan and wondering who her parents were, since she was adopted by the Grogans, and how and why Mr. Noodles had tried to take her away from them. Then a thought flashed through her brain:

"I wonder if that could have any bearing on Mr. Noodles prosecuting this case," but she dismissed it as highly improbable.

"Perhaps he didn't know any thing about it, since it was his grandfather who made the attempt. I wonder what kind of an attempt it was. He surely didn't try to steal her, but something must have happened to make Mrs. Grogan dislike him," she concluded. "Didn't Mrs. Grogan just say that he didn't want anyone to talk to Frank after that? But why then was he so friendly with Vic? I wonder," thought Kittie, "I wonder if Mr. Vic knew Frank before this. Yes, he must have, since he knew her father so well. I will ask Mrs. Grogan about it." Her reflections were interrupted by a knock at the door. It was the doctor and she hastened to answer the summons and admit him. She brought him to her grandmother's room and, after arousing her, said:

"See, mother, Dr. Charts is here to see you."

The old lady put her feeble hand out to him. He took the withered and bony hand in his and instinctively felt for the pulse. Kittie stood silently by and observed him closely. His fingers moved about over her wrist from one position to another, tried the other wrist, placed his ear to her chest and, after listening intently for some seconds, sat down on the chair which Kittie had placed by the bed and asked a few questions about the history of the case. Then he listened to the chest again for some minutes and, calling for a little water, he said:

"Her circulation is bad; I will give her a slight amount of stimulation."

He then proceeded to prepare a hypodermic injection, after which he wrote a prescription and told Kittie to see that she was provided with it at all times. He said quietly to Kittie before he left:

"She has organic heart trouble and is likely to drop off at any minute."

Kittie was pale and speechless; she had meant to ask him many questions, but his words seemed to freeze her and she couldn't think of any of them. Dr. Charts turned to leave the room and, as he did so, saw Mrs. Grogan standing in the doorway.

"Good evening," said he. "I thought you were still in the hospital."

"I came here to nurse the old lady," she explained.

Kittie was annoyed, but she said nothing, and, taking her purse from the mantelpiece, paid the doctor his fee.

When she has these fainting spells," explained the

doctor, "give her a teaspoonful of the medicine I left for her, and raise her head."

"Is it serious, doctor?"

"Yes; she might live a long while, and then she might drop off at any moment, and without warning."

After the doctor left, Kittie sat by her mother's bed, watching the peaceful sleep and easy breathing which followed the hypodermic.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE CALL OF DUTY.

On the morning of the 2d of January, Mr. Eben Noodles went to the City Hall and asked to see the Police Court records. The ponderous volume was placed on the table by a bailiff, and Grandfather Noodles sat down and began tracing the cases backward. Court had occupied a very short time that morning, most of the cases being the result of Christmas festivities. As it was the beginning of the new year the judge was disposed to be lenient with all offenders, so they were dismissed with a reprimand from the bench and admonished to turn over a new leaf with the advent of a new year, so that, by the time Grandfather Noodles arrived, the courtroom was nearly deserted. The judge and the bailiff were still there, however, and after he had traced the records for a few minutes, the judge said, as he was preparing to leave:

"Hunting for something special, Mr. Noodles?"

"Yes, said he; "perhaps your memory can assist me. Do you remember anything of a case against John Grogan for creating a disturbance at the Louisville Medical College. The warrant was sworn out by Dr. Charts."

"No," said the judge. "I have no recollection

about it. When did it occur?"

"I am unable to say," replied Mr. Noodles. "But within the past six months, I believe."

"I don't remember any such case, but you will undoubtedly find it on the docket if it occurred."

Mr. Noodles searched the docket for the entire year, and not once did John Grogan's name appear. He closed the book and took his departure, saying to himself:

"It is just as I supposed. The case of Charts vs. Grogan originated in the fertile brain of my grandson."

A great light began to dawn on him; he began to comprehend the plan of young Vic.

"I must know what that youngster is up to; I must know his hand. I made the blunder of my life by just the trick I fear he is trying to turn, and I must prevent it some way."

He then went to the office of the Kentucky Children's Home Society, where he had a long conference with the superintendent, after which he called at the office of Foster & Ryan.

"Good morning, Mr. Noodles," said Mr. Ryan, advancing to shake hands with his visitor. "Have a chair." At the same time he placed a comfortable chair in his private office, and took his hat, saying, "I am glad to see you starting into another year's work in such good health."

"My health has never given me any concern," said Mr. Noodles. "I feel just as young as I did 25 years ago. The young people send for the physicians nowadays. But I came to talk to you about

law rather than medicine, and more especially about Dr. Chart's case. How is your evidence?"

"Meagre," said Mr. Ryan. "Mr. Barry has been looking up evidence for us, and we find that there is not much in the case. Our clients will be acquitted without any difficulty. The case is clearly and technically one of self-defense."

"But," said Mr. Noodles, "can you show it? You should bear in mind that the act was committed in Grogan's own home, and a right skillfully conducted prosecution might give you some trouble."

"I can see no reason for a vigorous prosecution; there is no one takes enough interest in the case to push the prosecution, and your grandson will not do it out of consideration for you, even were he so inclined."

"I am not so sure of that," said Grandfather Noodles. "I simply wish to suggest that you are apt to be caught napping and unprepared for vigorous action."

"We have taken depositions of all of the witnesses but one—Mrs. Grogan, and Mr. Barry has been unable to locate her, until Dr. Charts came in the room this morning and gave us her address. She is nursing a woman on The Point while her granddaughter works."

This was a revelation to Mr. Noodles.

"Did you learn the name of her patient?"

"Yes, Lowry. The granddaughter's name is Kate, and they call her Kittie, the doctor tells us, so I think we can locate her and hear what she has to say about the case."

Grandfather Noodles made a mental note of the fact that the principal witness was being concealed for some reason; then it flashed through his mind that this Kittie might bear some relation to Vic and his friend. Then the idea became a conviction, and he saw at once the breadth and the depth of the plans of his grandson. He bade Mr. Ryan goodby, saying he would call again next day. Once out of the office he walked slowly toward his own, turning over in his mind the unconnected links of the legal chain which Vic seemed to be forging. One after another the unconnected parts suddenly fitted together in fragments of the whole, until he saw clearly that there was a studied and intelligent smith at work turning out link after link, not as separate and unconnected parts, but in one growing, consistent stretch of continuity. Eben Noodles recalled vividly the time when he was the artisan at work on a similar bond that entwined the destinies and made the life of John Brierly inseparable with ruin and disgrace. He entered his office, and seating himself at his desk, brought his ponderous fist down and said aloud:

"By God, the firm of Noodles shall not cause the ruin of another family. Too long have I sat in the shadow of a crime, committed to advance my own personal ambition. I stifled my conscience into believing that my personal reformation was synonymous with reparation. Though late, very late, if there is anything connected with the case of Brierly that can be undone, it shall certainly be accomplished. But there is one thing certain; the same

thing shall not happen again under the name of Noodles while I am alive."

Just then Vic entered the office and greeted his grandfather.

"Vic," began the senior member of the firm at once, "have you given the Charts case any consideration?"

"None whatever, grandfather. I believe the time has been set for a hearing, but I have been so much occupied with other matters that I haven't had time to give it much thought."

"Have you any evidence contrary to the plea of self defense?"

Vic hesitated, and then said:

"Well, none direct, only circumstantial, you know."

"Vic," said his grandfather, "beware of circumstantial evidence. It is a whirlpool that, once started, engulfs client and counsel. I pray you beware of it, and do not allow the temptation of ambition to carry you away and ruin your young life. I want to ask a favor of you. I want you to abandon the prosecution of this case."

Vic was surprised. He didn't suppose his grandfather had given the matter any thought, but he immediately smiled at the little consideration he had given his grandfather's astuteness.

"But I cannot abandon it altogether; you know my duty under the law."

"Delusion, my boy. You must learn sooner or later in life that there is a higher law. Men often mistake the call of duty. Few men hear it calling

from two directions. We are prone to call inclination duty, and deceive ourselves into believing that an apparent duty is a real one. A criminal lawyer too often takes unfair advantage of his duty. Do you get my meaning?"

Vic saw it perfectly, and yet made no reply. Thinking he had not made himself sufficiently explicit, the old man continued:

"I want to relate an experience of the late Judge William C. Jones, of St. Louis, that illustrates the point. There was a young man, in fact, a mere boy, who was being tried for murder in his court. The evidence showed that his widowed mother was pestered by a certain good-for-nothing man in the neighborhood, who insisted on forcing his attentions upon her. One evening, under the influence of liquor, he came to her house and rapped boisterously for admittance. The son answered the summons and told him he could not see his mother. He then became abusive, whereupon the young man shut the door in his face and locked it. With curses, he kicked and attempted to break open the door. The young man, fearing for the safety of his mother, secured a shotgun, fired through the door and killed the fellow. The boy, for he was a mere boy, was tried in Judge Jones' court and found guilty of murder. In those days the jury returned a verdict, and, if guilty, the judge sentenced the prisoner. Plainly the duty of the judge was to pass sentence under the law. He, however, was one of those rare individuals who could judge discriminately of duty, and he passed sentence upon him in the following manner: Call-

ing the boy up to the bench and patting him on the head, he said: 'Sonny, run along home with your mother, and when I get ready to pass sentence I'll send for you.'"

Mr. Noodles turned to his desk as if the interview was closed, thinking that he had said enough, and Vic walked thoughtfully away without a word. That night he lay awake most of the night and thought the matter over. The story of his grandfather had made a great impression upon him. He would have given anything to have been in the judge's shoes and had the opportunity to do the same thing. But would he have done the same thing? Vic doubted it. The stillness of the night and sober reflection quiets the riotous in us. The bad in our natures, on the qui vive during our waking hours, is lulled to rest from sheer exhaustion. Then, if ever, the good is uppermost. The better elements in his nature seemed to well up from every side. They whispered words of encouragement to him; they argued with him; they almost convinced him to champion their cause. He listened, thought, weighed their evidence and was persuaded. No sooner had he decided to heed the advice of his good genius than he fell asleep and dreamed of defending the good doctor. What a strong case he made out of self defense; what risk and personal sacrifice on the part of the physician, to save his friend; how he was painting the picture to the jury. There was not a dry eye in the court room. The jury was all attention. He saw the smile of approval in the eye of his grandfather, as the old gentleman took his hand and with

tears in his eyes said: "Vic, my boy, I am proud of you. It was a great victory for the right."

Vic awoke early and left without breakfast. He was nervous and had no appetite. He neglected his business all the forenoon. He could not get the interview and the dream out of his mind. He felt mean. He felt that he was on the wrong side of the case. He was impressed with the fact that his grandfather had detected him in some mean action. He avoided his paternal ancestor. He had been made to feel his littleness and ignobility. He was depressed and blue. At noon he ate heartily, after which his spirits began to come up to the normal. After all, if he did not prosecute the case, people would take it as a matter of course, and Dr. Charts would never know what a narrow escape he had. That thought galled him. His noble resolution seemed commonplace in daylight. His evil genius was at work recovering the ground lost in its absence. So persistent was it, that by three o'clock all the ground had been regained and Vic found himself in the same old rut—planning to do his duty by the law. The incident of the night before was closed.

His grandfather had observed him narrowly in the morning and was hopeful that at last he had succeeded in making an impression on his grandson, but when he returned home in the evening, he saw that it was lost, and said to himself, "We'll try a little more drastic treatment in the case, my son." He quickly formulated his plans and said nothing more to Vic.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE GHOST OF THE PAST.

The case of the Commonwealth vs. Dr. Charts was set for the 15th of January, and the night of the 14th was the evening appointed for Kitty to again meet Vic at the office. Grandfather Noodles had not forgotten; indeed, he had been devoting his entire time and attention to some matters that neither Vic nor his father knew anything about. So when the evening of the 14th arrived he stationed himself again in his private office in order to learn what occurred between Kitty and Vic.

At seven o'clock they entered the office together, and after providing her a comfortable chair, Vic asked after her mother's health.

"She is failing very fast," said Kitty. "The doctor says that she is liable to die at any minute."

"What doctor have you, Kitty?"

"Dr. Potts has been attending her."

"Kitty," said Vic, "you must have Dr. Emerson see your mother."

"I have already had Dr. Charts," she replied.

"Dr. Charts!" said Vic, in surprise. "Why Dr. Charts?"

"Well, mother was very sick one evening, and I became alarmed, so I telephoned hurriedly for him.

You know he has a good reputation, and I was so uneasy about mother that I never once thought of Mrs. Grogan. Perhaps if I had not been in such a hurry I might have sent for someone else. I forgot that you did not like Dr. Charts, until it was too late."

"You make a mistake," interrupted Vic. "I have nothing personally against Dr. Charts, only——"

"Oh, yes, I understand, Mr. Noodles, about him seeing Mrs. Grogan, and I did all that I could to prevent it. I hurried her off to bed, but she heard his voice and came out to speak to him."

"Then Dr. Charts knows where she is," said Vic reflectively. "Has anyone been there to see her?"

"Yes," said Kitty. "A gentleman has called twice, but has not seen her. Say, Mr. Noodles, did you know that Frank was not Mrs. Grogan's daughter?"

Vic was very much surprised, and asked how she knew, whereupon Kitty related the conversation between herself and Mrs. Grogan. "And Mr. Noodles, did you know that your grandfather tried to take her away from them in some way? I could not find out anything more about it."

Vic was truly astonished, and remarked that Mr. Grogan had always manifested great dislike for his grandfather, but he could never learn the cause. "I have known Grogan for several years, and in that time intimately, yet he never hinted at such a thing. I can scarcely believe it."

"What was the reason your grandfather tried to take her away?" asked Kitty.

Vic shook his head negatively and said, "Indeed, I cannot imagine, but I'll pump the old gentleman."

This was getting exceedingly interesting to the party in the next room, who was to be "pumped." It made that individual arise and take two or three turns noiselessly around the room, muttering, "And that's the girl. I should have known the name, but fourteen years is a long time to remember." The elder Noodles had schooled himself to blot cases from his memory as soon as settled, so it is not to be wondered at that from the multitude of cases during his career, a few should have never been recalled to mind. It illustrates the fact, too, that it is impossible to forget, for no matter how many years have elapsed, a chance word or reference serves to call back all of the circumstances, and Grandfather Noodles' mind was now busy running over the circumstances of Frank's early life.

"Did you know, Frank?" timidly inquired Kitty.

"No," said Vic, "and I have only seen her once; that was while she was in the hospital." He looked curiously at Kitty, wondering what prompted the remark. She blushed under his scrutiny and hastened to add:

"I just thought maybe you could tell me something about her, if you had known her very long."

Vic saw that the excuse was lame, but did not divine the true motive.

"Grogan once told me he had a daughter, and when I asked him about her, he gave me a description, but I never saw her except at the hospital. By

the way, Kitty, did you ask her about Dr. Charts threatening Mr. Grogan?"

"Oh, yes; I forgot to tell you that. I asked her about it, but she did not remember to have ever heard anything."

"He probably never told her anything about it, and I am really glad he didn't," said Vic.

"Well, did he really threaten him?" asked Kitty.

"Yes, he threatened to shoot him. It was the time they had the trouble at the school. He was angry, no doubt, and perhaps didn't mean it."

"Shall I tell her that?" asked Kitty, innocently.

Vic was upset by the question. He had hoped that Kitty would tell her without his direction. He didn't answer at once, but opened a drawer in his desk and began fumbling among some papers, as if in search of something in particular; meanwhile trying to solve the situation. His conscience really troubled him for an instant, but he was so confused by the question and Kitty's innocence, that his wits failed him altogether. He knew if he said "No," Kitty would never tell her. There was no way out of it, so he said, "As much as I hate to do so, still I think perhaps you should tell her. You see, we want to know the whole truth. The life of a prosecutor is hard. We have to do many things that are disagreeable, so we must steel our hearts to inflexibility. We are compelled to do our duty for the sake of society, no matter how unpleasant that duty is."

Grandfather Noodles here arose and passed quietly out of the office and down to the street.

The interview was soon over, and Vic, after

thanking Kitty, escorted her to the door as usual. She hurried to catch an East Market street car. When she was fairly seated a very old gentleman came and sat down beside her. Looking up, she recognized Mr. Eben Noodles. She was very much astonished, but taking it for a strange coincidence, looked out of the window, determined to pay no attention. As soon as fares were settled, she was startled by the old gentleman saying:

"This is Miss Lowry, I believe."

"Yes," was the reply.

"My name is Noodles. Are you on your way home?"

"Yes, sir," she replied, looking at him inquisitively.

"You don't mind my accompanying you, I presume. I want to see your grandmother on a little matter of business, and you can show me the way."

Kitty was so utterly astonished that she could only utter a faint "I thank you," and then lapsed into silence. "What on earth could Mr. Noodles want to see her grandmother for, and how should he know her?" It didn't occur to her that he had followed her from the building. "It was very mysterious, indeed." Neither spoke again. They left the car at Cable street and walked toward the river. Upon reaching home Kitty ushered Mr. Noodles into their parlor, and excused herself to inform her grandmother. She assisted the old lady down stairs and to the parlor, where she met Mr. Noodles with cold dignity. That gentleman bowed, and hastening to push a rocker to a convenient place,

remarked that he wished to speak to her alone. Kitty withdrew, after which Mr. Noodles carefully closed the door. Kitty finished her evening's work and sat down to read, but her eyes went skimming over the words without ever divining the meaning of a single one. She would go back and begin all over again, but after she had concentrated her mind on the third word her wits went flying to the parlor, where she could just detect a man's voice doing all the talking. She waited impatiently for three hours, when her nervousness and alarm could no longer be controlled. Going to the door, she tapped lightly, when her mother said, "Come in." She opened the door and shot a keen glance at her grandmother, but was surprised to see a smile on her face. She then turned to look at Mr. Noodles and was shocked. He seemed to have aged ten years since entering the room. His hair was disheveled by frequently passing his fingers through it, his eyes seemed sunken and his face wore an anxious expression.

With a cry of terror, Kitty rushed to her grandmother and, seating herself on the arm of the chair, said in alarm, "Mother, what's the matter?"

"Nothing, my dear." Rising, she led Kitty out of the room and told her to go to bed. She kissed her granddaughter affectionately and whispered: "Be brave, dear; don't worry about me, for I am happier to-night than I have been for many a long year. Our conversation concerns your future happiness."

If she really wanted to quiet Kitty, she made an unfortunate remark, for Kitty could feel her heart thumping against her ribs, and she went slowly to

bed with her brain in a perfect whirl of excitement.

Two hours later she heard Mr. Noodles leave. She bounded out of bed and down the stairs to meet her grandmother, who sank into a chair, and grasping Kitty's head, bowed her lips to it, and long and silently the tears flowed down and moistened the auburn tresses. Kitty was afraid to disturb her until she attempted to arise, when she assisted her to bed. Mrs. Lowry then asked for a dose of Dr. Charts' prescription and requested Kitty to sleep with her. "We will be up early in the morning," she said. They both retired, and Mrs. Lowry took Kitty in her arms and lay thus wide awake until day.

When Mr. Noodles left the house, instead of going directly to a car, he walked slowly toward the river. Reaching the corner of Fulton, he stopped to contemplate a group of ruffians who stood on the corner, indulging in boisterous language and profanity. As he stood there, one of them walked up to him, and after impudently looking him closely in the face, walked deliberately back again to join the group. Mr. Noodles observed a young woman coming along the street. She was walking rapidly, and was compelled to pass them. With her eyes down she hurried by. The conversation ceased, while each impudently surveyed her. One of them shuffled his feet; another cleared his throat, and they were given over to the business of attracting her attention. She hurried the faster and when half a block away began to run.

"Shoo!" said one at the top of his voice, and they all laughed boisterously.

"Here comes another one," said one of the gang.

They turned and saw a woman of about thirty walking deliberately down the street. Her right arm was outstretched, encircling the neck of a child of about six years. As they were opposite the squad the little curly head looked up and said: "I wish I was as big as you, mama." Then she tiptoed to reduce the disparity.

The ruffian battery was silenced. An invisible something throttled the hoarse jests. They fell aside and one or two stepped off of the walk to give her plenty of room, unconsciously lifting their hats.

She was not conscious of their proximity. Not a word was uttered by any of the group until mother and child had disappeared.

What confidence of the mother in her own security, under the chaperonage of her child.

Eben Noodles noticed all of this, and observed as he walked away: "What a wonderful power is innocence." He soon noticed a tiny building with a sign upon it. Going close, he read: Dr. Theodore Potts; Physician and Surgeon; office hours, 8—9, 10—11, 12—2, 7—8, and all night. He examined the surroundings closely and then passed on, scrutinizing closely every house that he passed. He spent some time wandering about the neighborhood until he came at last to a dilapidated two-story frame that stood alone in the commons. He walked around, examining every side, until he was sure that it was the place. "Yes, this must be the Devil's Shack," said he. The place seemed to be deserted. It was as still as death and the house apparently uninhabited.

He advanced to the front door, and pushing, found that it was barred from the inside. He tried the windows—all were fastened. He placed his ear to the keyhole and listened intently for some sign of life within. Finally he went to the rear of the house, where he found an unlocked cellar door. Descending the steps, he struck a match and soon found the steps leading up into the interior. He found the door at the top unlocked, and entering, proceeded to the front room, where he saw by the dim light that entered the curtainless windows, a headless drum upon the floor. Its remaining head, upon which the Grogan family had dined, had been removed, probably by some neighbor, who had made shoe strings for his children's shoes, which were themselves rescued from the dump. Mr. Noodles looked closely at every detail, and then passed into a back room, where there still stood two old rickety beds, with their miserable clothing jumbled into a heap. He opened a closet and saw a few articles of feminine apparel lying, fallen down or probably thrown down by looters. He selected a tattered gingham dress that had evidently been the property of Frank. It showed signs of long service, with frequent and extensive repairs. This he laid on the foot of the bed. Everything of value had been stolen from the house, if, indeed, it contained anything worth taking. He searched the house from end to end, led by simple curiosity; until, on the second floor, he found a box that had been broken open and the contents dragged out by thieves. After they had made their selection, they had stuffed the remainder haphazard in the box.

He searched the box, but, finding nothing of any interest, turned his attention to a general survey of the room. Noticing a small opening in the ceiling which evidently opened into the attic, he dragged the broken box and climbed upon it to investigate. The door was securely locked. The lock was new. The staples in the wood were also new, and Mr. Noodles was curious to know who could take enough interest in that attic to lock it securely. He had heard many wonderful tales of this locality, and his curiosity was thoroughly aroused. It would not do to break the lock, and yet he could not bring himself to leave without investigating the contents of the attic. While looking about for another opening, his attention was attracted by the sound of horses without. Going to the window he saw a team hitched to a covered van come to a stop in the rear of the house. There were two men with the wagon. One of them alighted and entered the cellar. Mr. Noodles then realized that they were coming to the house, so he hastily looked about for some place to conceal himself. Espying a closet, he quickly entered and closed the door. He heard footsteps upon the first floor, and then it occurred to him that the box might arouse suspicion, so he quickly placed it again in the position in which he found it, and had only time to conceal himself when a man entered the room, gave the box a shove across the floor with his foot, up-ended it, mounted and unlocked the door into the attic. He then went to the window and opening it, said in a low tone: "All right, Bill! Let's get them in." He then descended the steps. Grandfather Noodles hastily mounted

the box to take a survey of the attic. It was so dark, however, that he could make out nothing of the contents, and was compelled to hide again by the approach of both men. He opened the door just enough to see what was going on. Each man had a square tin box, which he deposited upon the floor, after which they again descended the stairs. Noodles began a hasty examination. They were securely locked. Soon two more boxes were left upon the floor. These he examined also. On one the lock was broken. He opened it and found it half full of ballots. Twelve boxes in all were brought in. The first man climbed into the attic, while Bill handed them up, saying as the last box disappeared :

“Be sure and lock that door good.”

Bill again kicked over the box, and he and his companion went noiselessly down and out. In a few minutes Mr. Noodles heard the rattling of their disappearance.

He then cautiously descended the stairs, saying as he did so :

“I now understand why Vic has been so sure of his election. Fortunate for them that I am of the same political faith.”

CHAPTER XX.

THE POWER OF SUGGESTION.

The prosecutor announced "Not ready" when the case of the Commonwealth vs. Dr. Charts was called on the 15th of January. After much argument, Judge Hindman finally granted a continuance, at the same time warning the prosecution that he would force them into trial upon the next calling of the case. It was then set for the 20th of April.

Vic went immediately to his office and lay down to review the case. After long deliberation he was evidently satisfied with his future course, for he was in excellent spirits when he joined the fellows at the club in the late afternoon. Nor was it long before there appeared evidence of his plan to destroy the popularity of Dr. Charts. This Vic considered necessary, and he set about it in a way that gave even him a few qualms of conscience.

Vic studied the men in the club critically.

"Ah," thought he, "what cannot be accomplished in three months!" He lighted a cigar and stood leaning reflectively against the mantel. In a corner of the Grille a pale young man of about thirty sat alone, smoking quietly. Vic's attention had been centered upon him for some time, when the young

man, perceiving it, nodded to Vic, who immediately joined him.

"What is the matter, Kirk?" asked Vic in surprise, as he noticed the young man lean heavily on the table as he rose to offer his hand.

"Been in the hospital."

"I didn't know you were sick. Why didn't you let your friends know?"

"Dr. Charts would allow no one to see me."

"You seem to have been pretty ill," said Vic, eyeing his friend critically, and determined to follow up the subject since Dr. Charts was concerned.

"Yes, and it seems to have been a very remarkable recovery, though I don't understand all about it."

Vic observed that his friend was inclined to be talkative, and determined at once to give him vent, so he rang for a waiter.

"You can drink, I presume. Your physician would hardly deny you that pleasure."

"No, he did not deny me, though of course I must be cautious."

Vic ordered a drink that was new to Kirk—being a mixture of iced fruit juices, White Rock and absinthe.

"You must try this; it is delicious."

Mr. Kirk sipped it and testified to its excellence.

"You have not returned to work?" queried Vic.

"Not regularly, though the city editor told me this morning that I might look out for some feature stories."

"I like that absinthe immensely," said Vic. "Here,

Tom, repeat this order. It is rare that you can get absinthe mixed properly. I taught the art to our head mixer. I say, Kirk, you look like you might have had a very narrow escape. You should be very grateful to—to—Who was your physician?"

"Dr. Charts."

"Oh, yes. I had forgotten."

"He is a very clever surgeon," Kirk continued. "I certainly owe him my life."

"I am glad to hear you say so, Kirk. If there is anything I like it is to see a man grateful to his physician, and, above all, to show it."

"I would be grateful, indeed, for an opportunity to show it," said Kirk warmly.

"Such opportunities always come, if one is only able to recognize them."

"There must have been something very unusual in my case, for he brought two or three doctors with him every day to see me."

"Indeed," said Vic, manifesting much interest.

"When I was able to leave the hospital he asked me to go before a medical society."

"It was an operation, then?" said Vic, questioningly.

"Yes, it seems that he undertook some operation upon the kidney and found what I believe he called a malignant growth. There was something about it that seemed to be of immense interest to the doctors. He removed the growth and I am getting well."

Vic pushed back from the table and searched Kirk's face, his own portraying great astonishment.

"Great Scott!" said he. "Charts has discovered it at last!"

Vic's manner was reflected in the growing excitement of Kirk.

"Do you realize, Kirk, what that man has done for you and for humanity?"

Kirk could only stare in wonder at Vic.

"That man has found," said Vic, speaking slowly, "the—cause—and—cure—for—cancer."

Kirk's expression was at first incredulous.

"I knew that someone would eventually learn its secret. Charts has been working on it for years. I have often watched him at work in his laboratory. You—don't—tell—me!" continued Vic, displaying the greatest astonishment.

"I don't know if that is exactly it," said Kirk, weakly.

"Why, certainly! It can't be anything else. You say it was malignant, and malignancy means cancer. Here, waiter, bring me a dictionary from the library. In the process of removal he has discovered the secret and removed the cause, or you would not be getting well. No wonder the doctors were interested."

Kirk was growing much excited over the matter, and when Vic ordered more absinthe, drank it greedily.

"Now, if Dr. Charts was not such a modest man, his reputation would be instantly made; but I know him to be of such a retiring disposition and of a nature so unostentatious, that, unless his friends let the world know, the secret will probably die with

him. Oh, he may report it to his society," said Vic contemptuously, "but they will all be jealous and the world will never be the wiser. Why, that ought to be given to the world without delay. Here is the dictionary."

"Mal—"

"Mal—"

"Malignancy; a cancerous tumor."

"Heretofore they have always been fatal."

Kirk's face was flushed as he took the book and verified Vic's findings. He then became meditative, and Vic knew that it was time that he should be left to his thoughts.

"Well, old man, I have an engagement," said Vic, as he watched Kirk swallow a fresh supply of absinthe, "or I would insist on you dining with me. I want to congratulate you. Come to see me. I am wonderfully interested in this subject. By the way, I was in Blum's gallery this morning and happened to see an excellent likeness of the doctor. A strange coincidence, wasn't it? Goodby, old man. I hope you will soon be strong," and with a final wave of the hand Vic left his friend Kirk, weakened from the effects of an ordinary severe operation, under the influence of absinthe and strangely excited over Dr. Charts' retiring modesty.

The next morning Vic saw with secret satisfaction an excellent likeness of the doctor on the first page of a morning paper. The head lines were:

"THE CAUSE OF CANCER DISCOVERED
AT LAST!"

Then followed a column article, detailing, most of it imaginative, a remarkable operation, during the course of which the cause was discovered. Under the picture was:

“Dr. A. Z. Charts, who has bestowed upon mankind lasting benefits by the discovery of the cause of cancer.”

The afternoon papers copied. Papers in other cities copied. During the week papers out in the State published the story. Finally it was taken up by that great disseminator of information—the Sunday Supplement.

Dr. Charts was out of the city the day that the story was published, but upon his return called immediately upon the editor for a denial in the paper. demanded an apology personally and threatened suit for damages.

The editor disclaimed any intention to injure, made profuse apology to the doctor and promised retraction in the paper. This he did in a one-inch column of type on the last page and without headline.

Poor Kirk took a vacation.

Dr. Charts lost caste immediately with his professional associates.

“He shouldn’t have intrusted the story to a reporter,” observed a charitable member of the society. “It was a bit too strong. He should have written it himself.”

And thus was imputed to the innocent doctor a

mean motive of advertisement.

The story, wholly false, so far as anything extraordinary was concerned, had gone abroad and had its effect. Nothing could undo it.

Kirk, when he realized the enormity of his offense, went to Dr. Charts and after declaring the honesty of his intentions, apologized profusely and took all the responsibility upon himself.

The doctor's name now began to appear with great frequency in the papers. At first the notices were such that no one could take offense except his professional associates, but soon there were notices of death and his name slyly mentioned as the surgeon in charge.

The doctor was at first inclined to resent all of this, but as he began to notice the coolness of his former friends, he ignored the whole proceeding and gradually stopped his attendance at the regular societies.

Every accident case, every death, every operation in which the doctor figured by some mysterious means got into the papers, until at last, listening to the counsels of his broken-hearted wife, he served notice upon the papers that his name must appear no more.

His County Medical Society kept a "Scrap Book," in which was pasted clippings from the daily papers, whenever a doctor's name appeared in print. At each meeting the book was passed among the members. This book was filled with these notices, and was a constant thorn in the flesh of the innocent doc-

tor. Finally charges were preferred against him by his society for unethical conduct.

The managers of the papers were not to blame. The items apparently came through the regular channels as news, and as such, they had a right to publish. The fault lay with the informant, whoever it might be, who evidently kept a close watch upon the doctor and who maliciously inserted his name.

Never once did the cause occur to Dr. Charts, until his wife pointed out to him that it was a deliberate attempt to break down his popularity and shift public sympathy to the other side in the coming trial.

Many of his old associates were changed, and the laity once getting the idea that the doctor was behind the advertising, reputed to him a desire for notoriety. And so Dr. Charts lost in prestige and popular sympathy; all of which, as Vic Noodles figured, would make the task of conviction easier, and would, at the same time, shield himself from the storm of popular indignation that always forms in the wake of an unpopular prosecution.

Every mail now brought letters of inquiry from poor unfortunates who sought relief. Other letters came from designing quacks, who boldly wanted to know what his "graft" was, and how much it would require to be taken into the business. None of these letters were answered, the doctor treating them with contempt. He was greatly annoyed by them, however, and began to grow exceedingly irritable.

Vic Noodles' conscience troubled him not a little over this affair, but as he again bent to the task be-

fore him, we find him soon planning further mischief, which he hoped would further his case.

Vic was at times much elated when he thought of his elaborate preparations, and he chuckled when he contemplated the surprise of the defense. He would spring one surprise after another until the opposition should go down in utter confusion.

CHAPTER XXI.

ARTIST BORN.

Pursuant to her plan, Frank attended the graded schools, where she advanced rapidly. Quick to learn and studious in proportion to her eagerness, she was soon able to carry the work of the eighth grade.

In music, too, she made rapid strides, mastering the details of every lesson. Mr. Springer instructed her daily, and, while he cultivated her voice after the most approved manner, did not neglect the piano-forte, in which she gave evidence of unusual ability. He required her to practice scales and exercises, combining keys and finger work in all possible combinations. Frank obeyed her instructor implicitly, never attempting to go beyond his instruction. As far as she could remember, she had always been able to play simple airs on the piano. In her very early youth and during the prosperity of the Gro-gans, they had possessed a piano. Poor though it was, it served as an instrument upon which the little tot was able to develop, unaided, the native talent that had been born in her to such an unusual degree. During her brief school experience she spent her recesses at the school piano, and as a child of six and seven she played airs that were far beyond her years. Her early talent had been noticed by her teachers,

who had given her a few simple lessons that were of immense value to her in that they gave her a little groundwork upon which she could develop herself unaided. Being soon deprived of the advantages of the public schools, and her own piano having gone with the other furniture in the general wreck of the household, she had been deprived of the opportunity to practice except on rare occasions. Nevertheless, the ability was there, awaiting the time when the magic touch of opportunity should cause the bud to unfold its petals into the full flower of proficiency.

Native talent needs but little encouragement to develop rapidly, and Frank was soon making rapid strides. One day he placed before her one of Nevin's simpler compositions. To Frank's surprise, she was able to play it at sight. Frank's face flushed with the excitement of success, and Bess fairly bubbled over with enthusiasm.

"That was but a test of your progress," said he. "I wish to avoid composition a little longer, and we will go further into the fundamental technique."

He now arranged a special set of exercises that would have proven difficult for many more advanced pupils. These Frank mastered readily.

Frank drilled herself severely every day, after which she and Bess usually rode horseback.

"What are your ambitions?" asked Bess during one of these rides.

"Do you mean in regard to music?"

"Certainly."

"To be able to teach and earn an honorable living," Frank replied, modestly.

"No higher than that?"

"Even that seems far beyond me."

Bess's laugh rang merrily as she said warmly:

"I, then, will supply the ambition. I mean to make a grand opera star of you. You are going to sing to thousands and thousands of people, draw a fabulous salary, wear diamonds—and—wear gowns made in Paris—and—have ever so many pictures in the magazines—and——"

"Please don't talk that way," pleaded Frank modestly. "That sounds like some of the fairy tales that I used to read when I was a child. A book of fairy tales was the only book I ever owned, and I had to conceal that from mother. I used to steal away to the attic," said Frank dreamily, "and read, and read."

"It may seem like a fairy tale to you now, but there is no limit to the worship of a popular operatic star."

"I don't think I should like it. I think that I should be much happier if I had a home like—like—your mother."

"Another Henry household," said Bess, laughing.

Frank blushed deeply and deftly changed the subject by asking Bess if she had ever heard a grand opera.

Bess then gave Frank a description—even singing for her some of the more familiar passages from the ones best known.

Frank listened eagerly until Bess had ^{been} of ^{sed} two or three passages from "Lohengrin," when Frank asked her to tell her the story of the opera.

Bess began with the earliest legends of the Holy Grail, and Frank became so absorbed that the remainder of the ride passed almost without her knowledge.

"When we reach the house," said Bess, "we will read up the subject. I have, I think, the musical score and possibly the libretto."

Mr. Springer joined them in the evening, and, after hearing of the conversation of the afternoon, gave Frank a full and complete history of the opera, together with a description of the stage settings, after which they spent a delightful evening in running over the vocal music of that beautiful opera.

One day after Frank had been under the daily instruction of Mr. Springer for about three months, she received another test of her progress.

It was Sunday, and Mrs. Jordan had come home with Mr. and Mrs. Henry from church for dinner. It was congenial company that afternoon. There was music in plenty—solos, duets, four hands on the piano, quartettes, and finally a full chorus, in which Mr. Henry especially distinguished himself in a solo part.

Suddenly Mr. Springer placed in front of Frank Mendelssohn's "Spring Song." She examined it thoughtfully, read it through and seemed reluctant to undertake it. She was thinking. Somehow Frank was beginning to feel that confidence born of genius that comes sooner or later to the competent. Would she be able to play it? She thought—even knew—she would, but how well? That, even genius cannot anticipate. Then, too, in reading over the score,

something seemed to strike her and cause her to sink into a profound revery. At last she began slowly and played it through without a false note.

"Bravo! Bravo!" cried Mr. Springer enthusiastically.

But Frank seemed not to hear him. Everybody was silent, astonished at the sudden mood. Finally:

"Now, let me play it as I think that it should be played."

Mr. Springer could not conceal his astonishment and delight as she gave the piece an interpretation that was new to him. During the rendition he had crept closer and closer to the piano, drinking in the wonderful effects of emphasis and expression that she put into the piece.

An artist himself, he was quick to see the wonderful native ability of his pupil, and told her quite frankly that she had talent of a rare quality and impressed upon her the necessity of always maintaining an originality in interpretation.

"It is originality that stamps the genius, whether it is in creating or interpreting."

Frank went to sleep that night with her soul full of wonderful harmony. All night long she sang to brilliant audiences, gorgeously gowned, yet none outshone her own. At every performance she sang into the ears of the same individual, whose eyes reflected her own brilliancy and whose nod of approval spurred her on to mightier effort. She saw her pictures displayed in innumerable poses and read the comments of the press. She was whirled from city to city with the speed of thought; never alone, but

with two accompanists; Mr. Springer, musical, and Ralph, otherwise. She heard band and orchestra and opera, and through it all ran a delicate thread of the "Spring Song."

Finally, after an indeterminate time had seemed to elapse, her dream seemed to change, and she awakened just as she was seated in a chair before the fire, rocking a pair of tiny blue eyes held close in her arms, to whom she was singing a lullaby learned in her youth. Once awake, Frank felt a thrill through her entire body which was entirely new to her. She recalled all of the incidents of her dream, in order that she might relate them to Bess. But somehow, when the closing scene dawned upon her, in full consciousness, she decided to keep her little secret to herself, and so locked it up in her heart, after having dwelt deliciously upon it until time to arise.

CHAPTER XXII.

It was the first of March when Frank conceived the idea of introducing music into the schools of Centreville.

"Doc" Allison was a jolly bachelor, striking in appearance, since the coal black of his mustache contrasted strongly with the whiteness of his hair. He received the girls in the parlor of the village inn, which room served also as an office for the trustee.

Being a man thoroughly progressive, he gave his immediate endorsement to the scheme, and offered at once to set aside a sum of money for the purpose. After several consultations it was decided that it would be best for the girls to go to Louisville and select a book suitable to the purpose and purchase enough to supply the school. The trustee offered to pay all of the expenses of the trip and of the purchase. Mr. Springer was eager, and volunteered to accompany them.

That night, two letters were dispatched announcing to Ralph and Barton that the girls would reach the city on the following day. Needless to say the boys were at the station and conducted the party at once to the hotel. At dinner, Ralph announced that he had secured tickets at McCauley's for the evening.

"Grand opera."

Frank stopped in the act of swallowing, and her large eyes lighted with eager interest.

"'Lohengrin' to-night, 'Carmen' to-morrow night, and Friday we shall hear 'Parsifal.'"

"Oh, how I shall enjoy it," said Frank earnestly.

"You shall have the pleasure every evening this week," said Ralph warmly.

That night, when the party was ushered to their seats, Frank whispered to Bess:

"This is the first time I ever saw a theatre."

"What do you think of it?"

"It's glorious! Look at the lights ! Do they need so many?" she asked innocently. "Oh, listen, Bess, I hear a violin away off."

"The orchestra is beginning," she explained. "They are in the pit in front of the stage."

As one after another of the instruments took up the prelude, Mr. Springer requested of Ralph that they exchange seats in order that he might explain the opera to Frank.

There was nothing for him to do but to comply, though he did it with bad grace. He managed to preserve an outward show of decorum, however, and, as he arose to comply, Barton Fields made a wry face at him.

Ralph's face flushed, and as the party had arisen, he quietly slipped behind Bess, and took a seat beside her, depriving Fields of the position, so that he was compelled to take a seat at the end furthest removed from Bess.

"Ralph, that is mean," she said.

"Not half as bad as he deserves. Let him sit there during the first act; it will do him good."

"Is it fashionable to remove hats during a play?" Frank asked timidly.

Bess was about to explain when she was startled by Frank's alarmed voice:

"Oh, my! The lights have gone out!" Then, as the spot light illuminated the centre of the curtain, Frank sat thankful for the darkness in her confusion.

Bess became aware that Frank was trembling, and upon leaning over to see if she was frightened, found her quietly laughing.

"I was thinking," said she, "how unnecessary it was to tell you this was my first visit."

Ralph was very quiet during the performance. He was not listening to the music, however, for he was painfully aware of whisperings, as he could see Mr. Springer's lips close to Frank's ear. He saw her face upturned to his and noted the gleam of sympathy in their eyes as they discussed the music. Little did he guess all that was passing in Frank's mind.

At the conclusion of the first act, Ralph and Barton went into the lobby, where they evidently adjusted their differences.

"What are people holding their hands to their eyes for?" asked Frank in a whisper.

Bess secured a pair of glasses from the usher, and after adjusting gave them to Frank.

There was an exclamation of surprise, as she was startled at the result.

"Oh, people come right up to you."

Bess laughed heartily.

Finally, through the glass, Frank met a pair of eyes that terrified her. Their pupils seemed enormously dilated and riveted upon her. She turned away the glass for a moment, and then, as she swung them again in that direction, encountered the steady gaze of the enormous eyes. She was frightened at the audacity and apparent proximity, and felt as if something dreadful were about to befall her. She was unable to shake off the feeling and was unable to enjoy the rest of music. Every time she looked in that direction, and there was a deeply impelling impulse that she could not resist, she encountered the same steady stare.

The eyes were a man's.

In another part of the house, Vic Noodles sat beside a lady who had been intently searching the house with her glass. Suddenly she leaned over and said:

"Mr. Noodles, who are the two ladies in the ninth row center, third and fourth seats?"

Vic studied the party closely, saying, as he returned the glass:

"They are strangers to me." He had, however, recognized first Ralph and Barton, then Bess and, finally, Frank.

Vic was thoughtful for awhile, then taking the glass, studied Frank's face long and intently. It was at this time that their eyes had the encounter through the glass.

When once free after the theatre, Vic hurriedly wrote and posted a note to Kittie, asking her to come to his office as early the next morning as possible.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A SUDDEN CHANGE OF PLANS.

At nine o'clock next morning, Kittie was in the office of Vic Noodles. She encountered Grandfather Noodles in the doorway, who turned to survey her as she went directly to Vic's door.

"Good morning, Kittie. I sent for you this morning because I wanted to discuss with you a matter of deep importance that has come up lately. As you know, I am deeply interested in Dr. Charts' case.

"Yes, Mr Noodles, and I have never been able to understand why."

"Never mind the reasons now, Kittie. There is one feature of the case that gives me a good deal of concern.

"Can I assist you?" asked Kittie, as she took the chair that Vic had placed for her.

"I thought that, perhaps, you could make some suggestions when you knew the circumstances. A woman can often suggest a way out of a difficulty. I sent for you because I have faith in your judgment."

Kittie blushed at the compliment and remained silent.

"When Miss Grogan went down in the country I

thought it would restore her to health, and, notwithstanding the fact that it would probably injure my case, I was perfectly willing that she should go."

"Why, what had you to do with her going?" asked Kittie, in surprise.

Vic, who rarely forgot himself as he did in this instance, was confused for a moment, but added:

"Oh, I had nothing to do with it directly—only—if I hadn't wanted her to go I should have probably prevented it. You see, Kittie, by having that girl under their care they can make her testify to most anything."

Kittie, who had an abiding faith in virtue of all kinds, said hastily:

"I don't believe she would do anything so dishonorable."

"Not intentionally, perhaps, but she might be deceived. I foresaw all of this before she left, but I have taken a real interest in the girl and realized that the trip would greatly benefit her. She is now in the city. I saw her at a distance last night. She seems to have completely recovered and it does seem too bad to subject her to further risks. I do wish she could be induced by some means to remain here. Could you suggest anything?"

"It seems too bad for her to come back so soon," said Kittie.

"It is for her good as well as my peace of mind. You see, Kittie, if she should happen to be deceived and testify to a falsehood at the trial, she would be liable to prosecution for perjury."

"Oh, that would be terrible. You wouldn't prose-

cute her—would you, Mr. Noodles?” asked Kittie anxiously.

“Duty is stern,” said Vic. “I was willing to let matters rest as they were, but she is now in the city to consult with the attorneys for the defense, and I must prevent them from coaching her. You see, Kittie, I don’t care anything for any testimony they may have, for I already have enough evidence to hang Dr. Charts.”

Kittie placed her hands over her eyes and shuddered.

“Oh, they won’t hang him—will they?”

“Not if I don’t want them to,” said Vic, haughtily.

“Oh, Mr. Noodles! Please don’t let them do anything so terrible. You won’t—will you?” she implored. “Think of Frank.”

Vic needed not the last admonition, for since the night before, he could think of little else.

“That is just the point I have been driving at. If she doesn’t tell the truth, her whole life is ruined.” There was an expression of determination on Vic’s face that terrified her.

“The worst feature is that the mere fact of her being constantly with them will compromise her. She is a stranger to them and what motive can they have except to mould her testimony. They will place her so under obligation to them that she will not tell the truth for fear of hurting them; then—well—I shall have to prosecute her for perjury.”

Kittie was trembling. She had never seen Vic when he was so terrible.

“I believe,” said Vic, “that if she realized the

situation, she would refuse to stay." Vic saw that Kittie was as yet unconvinced and though, almost persuaded, it would require a little more to capture her. He tried another tack.

"The real fact is that if she stays there it will hurt Dr. Chart's chances and Ralph Henry's also, when his case comes up. If I was selfish I should want her to stay, but I don't like to see an innocent girl imposed upon."

Vic took Kittie's hand, which she tried feebly to resist, but he held it fast, and, as Kittie saw a softened expression where she had just seen eyes so terrible, she was bewildered. When he now asked her if she did not agree with him in the interest of Frank, she faintly answered in the affirmative.

"Couldn't you see her and tell her the real situation?" asked Vic. "If she decides to stay, you wouldn't mind taking her home with you—would you?"

"No; I should like it very much, but I fear it would be dreadfully dull after living with the Henrys. I hear that they have lots of money. Will it be doing the right thing?" asked Kittie doubtfully.

"Won't she be under your protection?" ventured Vic.

Kittie blushed and was silent, then arose to go.

"She is at the Galt House," said he.

Kittie hurried to her work, but was so distracted during the morning that her employer came to her and said:

"Miss Lowry, you are ill; you must not try to work."

Kittie protested, but he said that he had been observing her for some time and insisted that she go home at once.

Vic Noodles had made a sudden change in his plans. The night before when he had turned the glasses upon Frank, he beheld a very beautiful girl. That one look was a revelation to him, and made him suddenly realize her position in the world. He determined to make her acquaintance under circumstances that would allow him to study her at his leisure.

Frank had quietly slipped away from her friends and had gone for a look at the scenes that were so lately her little world, when, greatly to her surprise, she met Kittie returning from work.

Kittie greeted her enthusiastically, saying:

"Oh! How fortunate that I should meet you. I have something particular to say to you." Taking Frank's arm, the two, arm in arm, walked slowly toward the river, engaged in earnest conversation.

An hour later, two girls were seen hurrying along Campbell street. They were compelled to wait at a crossing for a coupe to pass, which, with its blinds drawn, was being driven rapidly toward the river. Impatient at the delay, they hurried along bent on reaching their destination at the earliest moment.

Upon reaching their destination, Kittie hurriedly entered the house and called loudly for Mrs. Grogan. Frank was waiting eagerly for a glimpse of her mother, when Mrs. Lowry appeared at the top of the

stairs and, after expressing surprise at Kittie's early return, told them that Mrs. Grogan had gone out early in the day, and an hour since had returned and, after packing up her few belongings, had said that she would not be back.

Frank searched Kittie's face for the meaning, not seeming to understand what had occurred.

"She's gone," said Kittie.

"Gone!" murmured Frank. Then she sank into a chair and covered her face with her hands to conceal her tears.

"Yes; she left in a carriage not five minutes ago," she explained.

The girls looked at one another and understood that the carriage which they had seen contained Frank's mother.

At six o'clock, when Bess entered Frank's room to awaken her, she found the room vacant, and a note on the table. Bess rapidly tore open the letter and, after reading a few lines, rushed wildly to Ralph's room. Finding the boys together, she hurriedly read them the following tear-stained letter:

"My dear, dear Bess:

"I know you can never, never forgive me for what I am about to do. I have no choice, however; I cannot return with you to your home, nor can I at this time tell you why. Some time you may learn. Believe me, it is for the best and don't be alarmed for I am taking the step entirely of my own volition. I have cried bitterly today before I could summon resolution to do this. Forgive me, if you can, for

not consulting you, for if I had but seen you I should have failed."

Bess was scarcely able to read, so much did the tears blur her sight. Finally, she gave way completely and, throwing herself in Ralph's arms, wept like a child.

Barton took the letter and continued to read:

"Please, dear, dear Bess, defend me to your mother, whom I love better than anyone on this earth. Tell her that it is for the best. Reassure her and kiss her again and again for me. Tell her how much I love her."

Here the lines were crooked and badly written. The paper was still moist and the ink had run.

"Don't judge me, Bess, until you know the reasons. If I say 'Goodby' to you, I hope it will not be for long.

"Please do not try to find me. Tell Mr. Springer 'Goodby' for me and thank him for me.

"Ever yours,

"FRANK."

Barton folded the letter slowly and Mr. Springer took it. Ralph, perceiving this, released Bess and, striding rapidly across the room, snatched the letter fiercely from his hand and hurried to the office of Eben Noodles.

He reflected bitterly of the mention of Mr.

Springer's name while his was forgotten.

Silly boy, you are yet in your very infancy, while the girl has outstripped you. Did you know her heart and the many demands made upon it, you would not censure. Bess had no heart to attend the opera and went to her room, seeing no one but Ralph and Barton.

Ralph had shown the letter to Grandfather Noodles, who, after much thought, advised that Bess should return home and, for the present, attempt nothing.

Accordingly, Bess, accompanied by Mr. Springer, returned to Centreville upon the following day.

Mr. Springer confided the story to his aunt, who was missing from the house five minutes afterward. Thus the late developments reached Centreville and soon went the rounds.

Mrs. Henry was very much disturbed by the action of Frank, but reassured by her husband, became contented. She read Frank's letter in secret many times and found it a source of great consolation.

"Rest assured," said Mr Henry, "when the truth is known, her action has in some way concerned the welfare of the family."

"Poor girl," sighed Mrs. Henry, "we shall be very lonely without her."

CHAPTER XXIV.

A CALCULATION WITH ONE UNKNOWN QUANTITY.

When Vic heard the details, as he did upon the following day, he was much pleased with himself.

"Now," thought he, "I will make the young lady's acquaintance. He could scarcely restrain himself from going to call upon her, but realizing that she might grow suspicious of him if he exhibited any undue haste, he forced himself to wait until she should grow accustomed to her new surroundings. He could not help recalling the picture she presented at the theatre. It affected him strangely and he smiled as he thought that she was now in his power absolutely.

The following Monday found him on Campbell street. He had chosen Monday, not caring to meet Kittie at home. He figured that Mrs. Lowry would be confined to her room and that he could consequently see Frank alone.

Vic's heart was beating high with anticipation as he pulled the bell. He became strangely nervous as he recalled the glimpse he had of her. He pictured to himself her thankfulness, for ^{he} ~~he~~ ^{it} meant to make her feel her obligations to him. ^{She} ~~It~~ ^{he} would not fail to recognize the interest he was taking in her and would not fail to make appropriate returns in confi-

dence and friendship. There was a smile of the most pleasant satisfaction as he thought of how completely she had come under his control. Vic was satisfied with all the world in general, himself in particular.

Much was his surprise when Mrs. Lowry answered the summons.

Vic bowed politely and entered at her invitation.

She ushered him into her little parlor and took a seat close beside him.

After inquiring kindly about her health, Vic asked for "Miss Grogan."

"Frank isn't here," she said simply.

"Not here!" said Vic, in surprise and, in a tone that betrayed how keen was his disappointment:

"When will she return?"

"I don't expect her to return."

Vic was stupefied.

"I thought she was here. Where is she?"

"She was here but she has gone."

Not wishing to appear too eager, he merely remarked that he had an important message for her:

"A matter in connection with the case," he explained.

"Could you tell me where I could find her?"

"I do not know where she is—at present."

Mrs. Lowry seemed reluctant to answer questions and Vic gave a turn to the conversation, in order that he might hit upon a plan to learn her secret.

"I am very sorry, indeed, that I failed to find her," said he, at last. "There is something of the utmost importance concerning her mother. If you should

hear anything from her soon, please tell her that it is important for me to see her."

"You say it relates to her mother?"

"Yes. Nothing serious, you understand, but still I think the young lady should know."

"Can you tell me? I am much interested in her."

"Sorry; but it only concerns the young lady. I can conceive of nothing so foolish as to leave no address," said Vic, reflectively.

"Did I say she left no address?" asked Mrs. Lowry, smiling.

"Yes; you said you didn't know where she was."

"Finish the sentence: 'at present.'"

"I don't understand why she should conceal her whereabouts," said Vic with warmth.

"There are many things you don't understand, Mr. Noodles."

Vic was nettled and said slowly and with a dash of sternness:

"Am I to conclude that you are concealing a witness?"

"And is she yet a witness? and have you any process of law that gives you any authority to demand her? or any excuse for your audacity in attempting to frighten me?" exhibiting much spirit.

"There was no threat intended," said Vic meekly. He was much surprised at the bristling front of the old lady.

"I may as well tell you that you cannot see the young lady," said Mrs. Lowry at last.

"You surely have an excuse for such an action."

"I have and you will learn it rather abruptly one of these days."

It seemed to Vic that she attempted to be prophetic in her last remark. He laughed. It gave him no concern for he could not conceive of any one penetrating his plans, much less hoping successfully to controvert them.

It is the part of egotism to fail to appreciate the penetration and ability of another. Vic was so self-conscious that the efforts of the defense gave him no uneasiness. He could not imagine himself on the defensive. All of his life he had been the aggressor, and so he would continue. In short, it would not be too extravagant in the use of words to say that Vic Noodles was infallible.

Vic was bubbling with wrath as he strode sullenly out of the house. The physical beauty of Frank had aroused him. When she was in the hospital he paid little attention to her, but once restored to the bloom of health, and re-enforced by the conventionalities, she attracted him strongly. Had not her present condition been due directly to him? Would she fail to recognize it? He would get her under his control; it was so easy. She was alone in the world. And yet she had managed to evade him. Vic ground his teeth in rage. He would question Kittie to see if she were double dealing with him. He soon regained his composure and his alert brain was soon concocting new plans.

He would send Mrs. Grogan back to Lowry's. Frank would hear of it and fly to her mother, for he did not doubt that there were communications be-

tween Frank and Mrs. Lowry. She would not then leave her mother.

Vic grinned as he said aloud :

“When the cow gets her calf again, I’ll drive them both to pastures of my own selection.”

The unforeseen happened to Vic, for when he had put his scheme into execution he learned to his amazement that the cow had followed the calf and both had disappeared.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE TRIAL.

At ten o'clock on the morning of the 20th of April, the Criminal Courtroom was crowded to such an extent that police were stationed at the doors to control the crowds and, at the same time, so assist witnesses and privileged persons to get into court.

Judge Hindman rapped for order and instructed the clerk to call the jury.

"Richard Coates," called the clerk.

"Richard Coates," echoed the bailiff.

"Here!" answered Mr. Coates as he took his seat in the jury box.

When twelve men were secured, they all stood and were sworn by the clerk, after which the judge called for the attorneys.

"Foster and Ryan for the defense," said the clerk.

"Let all the witnesses in this case come forward and be sworn," said the judge.

Dr. Fields, Mrs. Grogan, Frank, Dr. Emerson, Dr. Potts and Michael O'Leary were sworn, after which they were conducted, by the bailiff, to the jury room.

Mr. and Mrs. Henry, Mrs. Charts, Ralph and Bess were provided comfortable seats inside the railing. Dr. Charts sat beside his counsel.

"Let the prosecution state its case," said the judge.

Vic Noodles arose and, after addressing the judge, walked slowly and took his position in front of the jury. As he faced them, his grandfather entered and took a seat beside Mr. Ryan.

"Gentlemen of the jury," began Vic, "you are called upon to-day in one of the most trying situations in which it is the misfortune for men to be placed. I say misfortune, for, Alas! how many, many times men similarly placed have been swayed by the subterfuge and eloquence of the defense—carried away from themselves and led to allow their sympathies to dictate to an otherwise clear judgment. I warn you to judge this case dispassionately. It will take the most persistent concentration to keep from being swept away by the flood of eloquence that will emanate from my esteemed adversary, Mr. Ryan. You should know that he has the gift of Demosthenes. He so paints the miseries and tears of this human comedy, which we call life, that the unwary are swayed as if by a mighty and invisible force. Combat this. Resist his eloquent attempt to lead you into by-rhetorical paths. Cling with all your power to the hard, firm facts that will be set before you. Your judgment must come from your heads and not from your hearts. Let your cold, unhampered judgment preside in the jury box today.

I am going to show you, by the evidence, that Dr. Charts went armed to the home of Mr. Grogan and, while there, managed to involve him in an altercation, during which he shot JOHN Grogan. The

defense will attempt to make you believe that it was self-defense; and yet, I will prove to you that he was never attacked. Furthermore, I expect to show you a motive, both on the part of the accused and his accomplice, borne out by the ante-mortem statement made, by the dying man, in the presence of reputable witnesses. We will show you that he was a peaceable, law-abiding citizen,, and had a right to resist an intrusion into his own home, besides many other things that I hope to bring out in the evidence.

At first, I was forcibly impressed that this was just an ordinary case of self-defense and that there was no criminality in it at all. That is what it looks like on the face of the story as given out by the papers; and yet, how powerful must be that agency to prepare the minds of the public. I was almost convinced of Dr. Charts' innocence and should never have prosecuted, had not Mr. Grogan summoned me to the hospital and made known his desire to make a dying statement. That statement opened my eyes and I have left no stone unturned that could shed any light on this affair until I am firmly convinced of a well-laid plot to take the life of this man.

"You, gentlemen, must be the judges. Let not social position, previous reputation or outside influence interfere with your clear judgment. If, in your opinion, a crime has been committed, let it be said of you that you were strong enough to uphold the law and punish the guilty parties."

Mrs. Charts, who was sitting by the side of Mrs. Henry, heard the opening statement of the prosecution with astonishment and dismay. Her husband

had always been the realization of her ideal and the thought that he could be guilty was so horrible to her that her head dropped on the shoulder of Mrs. Henry. She lay stupefied with the audacity of the attempt. How could anybody suggest to the jury that her husband could be guilty of so horrible a deed. She sobbed quietly for a few minutes, during which Mrs. Henry did the best she could to pacify her. Suddenly, Mrs. Charts sat up straight. It had flashed through her mind for the first time that her husband's life was in danger. With the cry, as of a wounded lioness, she darted across the room to the prosecutor's table and, with pupils dilating and contracting in rapid succession, her nostrils emitting the hot breath of desperation, she screamed in the face of the prosecutor:

"Vic Noodles, you lie. You know he is innocent."

The court bailiff rushed to the table to seize her. Dr. Charts was on his feet in an instant, when the gavel of Judge Hindman came down with a loud rap, as he said:

"No, no, Mr. Bailiff, let her alone."

The bailiff hung his head and walked slowly away, while Mrs. Charts fell fainting into the arms of her husband.

Turning to the jury, the judge said:

"Gentlemen, you are excused until tomorrow. Dr. Charts, you may accompany your wife and report here tomorrow at ten o'clock."

Dr. Charts and Mr. Henry carried the fainting form from the courtroom and hastened home, accompanied by Mrs. Henry and Bess.

Vic Noodles pondered over this occurrence a good deal during the rest of the day. Somehow the words seemed to follow him about, constantly saying:

"Vic Noodles, you lie. Vic Noodles, you lie."

On the following day when court convened, Mr. Foster addressed the jury as follows:

"Gentlemen, we have a simple story to tell you and will call upon you to consider the gravity of the charge brought against one of our leading citizens. You are the safeguard of our liberties and, as such, have it within your power to restore liberty or to take away life. The prosecution, we believe, will attempt to bolster up a flimsy case of circumstantial evidence. Be not deceived thereby. I believe you capable of sifting the evidence. Save only the nuggets of ore and wash out well all of the sand."

Mr. Foster then recited, in narrative form, the events exactly as they occurred, beginning with the appearance of Frank at the clinic, and detailing events exactly as the reader understands them.

"This, gentlemen, is the true story of what occurred, and we will substantiate the story."

Mr. Foster contented himself with this simple narration of events, and sat down.

"Let the Commonwealth call its witnesses," said the judge.

"If it please the court," said Vic Noodles, "I have here the ante mortem statement of Mr. Grogan, which I wish to read to the jury."

Mr. Ryan was on his feet in an instant. "If it please the court," he said, "we would like to see this statement before it is submitted to the jury."

Mr. Noodles and Mr. Ryan both advanced to the bench to argue the question.

"This," said Mr. Noodles, "is a statement made by John Grogan when he realized that death was upon him. It was made voluntarily, witnessed, signed and attested in the proper manner; and I believe, under the rules of evidence is admissible. Such as it is, it is his statement; and if admissible at all, should be admissible in its entirety; consequently, it is useless for the defense to read it."

Mr. Foster was now at the bench.

"Your honor," said Mr. Ryan, "we have a right to object to a witness answering certain questions, because it is our duty to protect the interest of our client; and since the life and liberty of our client are in jeopardy, it behooves us to be doubly on the alert. In justice to ourselves, our client and this court, we ask to see this alleged confession."

"Your expression 'alleged confession' is highly improper," said the judge.

"As members of the bar, you have no right to presume but what the confession or statement is genuine; however, I will sustain you in the point made."

Vic realized, too late, that he should have reserved his statement until the last; for the decision showed his hand to his opponents. He was vexed at his stupidity and made a counter stroke to recover his lost ground. "If it please your honor, I will place the statement in the hands of the clerk, in order that the stenographer may prepare a ^{certified} copy for the defendant's counsel."

This was immediately ordered by the judge. Vic smiled to himself and then said :

"If it please your honor, in order not to delay the case, and while the statement is being prepared, I will call Mrs. Grogan to the stand."

Grandfather Noodles passed a note, unobserved, to Mr. Ryan, who said instantly :

"We object, your honor."

"State your ground," said Judge Hindman.

"The prosecution has indicated the order of his evidence, and we wish to hold him to it."

"I will have to sustain the prosecution," said the judge.

Vic had good reasons for not permitting Foster and Ryan to read the statement ; especially while his grandfather was about—it might never get to the jury. His idea in introducing it first was, that he thought he would stand a better show in getting it to the jury without attracting the attention of the defendant's counsel ; but the way in which Foster and Ryan picked him up, set him to thinking, and he immediately reached the conclusion that they were lying in wait for the confession. But then, how should they know that he had it—oh, yes, grandfather—but how should he know ? "How does he know everything?" immediately thought Vic. Vic Noodles had always looked upon his grandfather as being possessed of a gift of second sight. He was always a marvel to him, and he feared him as he did no other man.

The bailiff called Mrs. Grogan, who had reported at Vic Noodles' office the night before.

"You will please state your name and age," said Vic.

"Mrs. Mary Grogan, an' I'm fifty-six year this comin' Siptimber."

"Was John Grogan your husband?"

"Yis, sor—sixteen year."

"Where did you and your husband live?"

"Well, we lived several places, but the last was in a house just aff of Cable street, near Fulton."

"That neighborhood is known as 'The Point,' I believe."

"Yis, sor."

"And the house is known in the neighborhood as the 'Devil's Shack'?"

"Yis, sor."

"How long have you lived in this house?"

"About four years."

"That was your home, was it not?"

"Yis, sor."

"You were at home the night Mr. Grogan was shot?"

"Yis, sor."

"Mr. Grogan and Dr. Charts had trouble before this time, did they not?"

"We object, your honor," said Mr. Foster. "In the first place we object to the leading manner of the questioning; and in the second place, we insist on the witness telling her story in her own way; furthermore, we object to the witness answering the last question at all."

During this speech Vic Noodles nodded to the witness, unobserved by the court, who, as soon as Mr.

Foster quit speaking, answered the question:

"Yis, sor."

Vic was pleased; Foster disgusted; and Judge Hindman, turning to the witness, said: "Madam, when you hear the attorney object to a question, you must not answer until I tell you."

"Yis, sor."

"What was the trouble between Mr. Grogan and Dr. Charts?"

"We object, your honor—the matter is irrelevant," said Mr. Foster.

"Your honor," said Vic, "I don't believe it is the wish of the court to interfere with anything that will throw light on this case. If the objection is sustained, it establishes a precedent for other rulings that will seriously handicap me in getting this knotty case to the jury. I am confident that the defense has no other motive than to place obstacles in my path. This evidence is a part of my plan to show a motive; and I feel that if I am not permitted to do that, the ends of justice will be defeated. Let them explain to the court the motive in the objection."

"My motive is honest enough—to protect an innocent man from a conscienceless villain," retorted Mr. Ryan.

"Mr. Ryan," said Judge Hindman, "your objection is not sustained. And let there be no more personalities indulged in during this trial."

Mr. Ryan's Irish blood was up, and he replied:

"The rulings of the court have driven me to it."

"I fine you five dollars," said the judge.

Ryan was boiling.

"Make it ten," he said.

"Assess a fine of twenty-five dollars against Mr. Ryan; and if there are any more personal remarks made during this trial, I will send the guilty person to jail," said Judge Hindman, as he ran his finger down his collar to loosen it and mopped his face, which was flushed with anger.

"Mrs. Grogan," said Vic, "please tell the jury what trouble Mr. Grogan had with Dr. Charts."

"John got into some trouble at the college and Dr. Charts had him arristed an' threatened to shoot him if he iver come back."

"Did your husband know Mr. Ralph Henry, who was with Dr. Charts that night?"

"Yis, sor; John, he met Frank a-walkin' with Mr. Henry wan day along the river an' they had some wurruds, an' he brought Frank home with him."

"John had words with Mr. Henry, you mean?"

"Yis, sor."

"These two men, Dr. Charts and Mr. Henry, came to your house unsolicited, didn't they? You didn't ask Mr. Henry to come or ask him to bring Dr. Charts?"

"Oh, no, sor, I just——"

But catching the eye of Vic, she stopped.

"Let her finish," said Mr. Foster.

"Were you expecting them?" asked Vic instantly.

"We object," said Mr. Foster. "The witness was prevented from telling something, by Mr. Noodles. We want her to finish her statement."

"You will have an opportunity to cross question her," said the judge.

"Mr. Grogan was very much surprised to see these men enter his home, was he not?"

"Yis, sor; John was mad."

"Now think carefully before you answer this question. Who made the first movement between John and Dr. Charts?"

"Dr. Charts took John by the throat."

"That was the start of the trouble?"

"Yis, sor; John hadn't done nothing to um, but order um to leave."

"And instead of leaving, Dr. Charts took John by the throat?"

"Yis, sor."

"Did Mr. Henry do anything to Mr. Grogan?"

"Yis, sor; he kicked John on the wrist."

"Had John done anything to Mr. Henry up to that time?"

"No, sor."

"Then John got a knife, didn't he?"

"Yis, sor; there was two of um jumped onto him."

"Did Dr. Charts try to take the knife away from John?"

"No, sor; he shot him."

"Was John a good husband?"

"Yis, sor, only when he was drinking; then he quarreled with me."

"He wasn't beating you at the time these men entered, was he?"

"No, sor."

"You took your daughter to the clinic?"

"Yis, sor, and she didn't want to go before the

class, but I'd a made her, only Mr. Henry wouldn't let me."

"You say Mr. Henry wouldn't let you take her before the class?"

"Yis, sor; he said for me to take her home and he'd come there to see her."

"I believe you said a while ago that Mr. Grogan brought your daughter home one day, when she had been walking with Mr. Henry?"

"Yis, sor."

"Mr. Henry seemed to think a good deal of your daughter?"

"I don't know—but he was awful nice to her."

"Where is your daughter now?"

"Mr. Henry and his sister took her to their house in the country."

"She has been with them since that time, has she not?"

"Yis, sor, iver since John died."

"Why did they take her there?"

"We object, your honor," said Mr. Foster.

"Don't answer that question," said the judge.

Vic didn't care. He had asked the question for the jury to answer. Grandfather Noodles saw it, and smiled. He recognized the stroke and was not surprised to see his grandson use it.

"You may have the witness, gentlemen."

"Mrs. Grogan," began Mr. Ryan, "you said that your husband and Dr. Charts had trouble at the clinic. Now, how do you know they had trouble?"

"Because they did."

"Answer my question. How do you know?"

"Because he had John arrested."

"How do you know that he was arrested?"

Vic Noodles said coolly to Mr. Ryan, "Why, he told her, of course."

"You keep out of this."

"Judge, your honor, who is on the stand here, Vic Noodles or Mrs. Grogan?"

"Your honor," said Vic. "It was such a simple, silly question, that I answered it inadvertently."

Ryan was furious. Judge Hindman didn't say a word, but he administered a rebuke, in a look at Vic Noodles, which showed that individual plainly that he had better not repeat it. Vic hoped, however, that it had served the purpose of helping the witness out of a tight place.

Mr. Ryan repeated the question: "How do you know your husband had trouble?"

"John told me all about it," was the answer.

Mr. Ryan grew red in the face.

Vic smiled faintly, but observing the stern countenance of his grandfather, the smile disappeared instantly. He admitted to himself that his grandfather's presence was intimidating.

"How do you know that Dr. Charts threatened to shoot your husband?"

"He told me."

"He told you, did he?" yelled Mr. Ryan, in a voice pitched almost to the key of C.

"Was he in the habit of telling you everything?"

"Yis, sor, 'most everything."

Vic leaned back in his chair, put his thumbs in his arm pits, threw his head back leisurely and

stretched his legs in full enjoyment at the expense of Mr. Ryan.

Mr. Ryan was beside himself with the insolence of the picture and in a voice breaking with passion he fairly screamed at the witness:

"Is that the only way you have of knowing?"

"Yis, sor; John told me."

It was some seconds before Mr. Ryan could continue. He finally regained his equilibrium and said:

"Now, you said a while ago that your husband had words with Mr. Henry and that he met them walking along the river. Now, when was that?"

"I don't remember."

"Did you see your husband bring your daughter home?"

"Yis, sor."

"What did your husband have against Mr. Henry?"

"I don't know."

"He didn't tell you that?"

"No, sor."

"Did Mr. Henry resist in any way?"

"I don't know, sor."

"Why don't you know?"

"I don't know, sor."

"Didn't he tell you?"

"No, sor."

"I thought he told you everything?"

"He did, sor, sometimes."

"Sometimes he did and sometimes he didn't. Mostly he didn't?"

"Yis, sor."

"Isn't it a fact, Mrs. Grogan, that you knew and consented to Dr. Charts and Mr. Henry coming to your house?"

"No, sor. Mr. Henry said he was comin'."

"You knew your husband did not like Mr. Henry?"

"No, sor, I never knowed it."

"What!" screamed Mr. Ryan at the top of his voice, and said just as fast as he could talk:

"Didn't you say a while ago that he brought your daughter home and that he told you that she was walking with Mr. Henry?"

"Yis, sor, but I never thought."

"Never thought what?"

At this juncture Vic sat up straight in his chair and became all attention. The sudden movement attracted the attention of the witness, and she interpreted the movement to mean that she was to be careful of her answer.

"I never thought about it," she said slowly.

"Never thought about what?"

"About him coming to the house."

Vic gave a little sigh of relief; his witness was better trained than he had hoped. He knew her character well enough to know that if he could get her to commit herself to a statement—right or wrong—she would stick to it under all circumstances. This he had accomplished in his direct examination, and she was sticking to it with a tenacity that was remarkable.

"Didn't you know that there would be trouble if the doctors came to your house when your husband

was at home?"

"I knowed he would be mad, but I didn't look for the trouble that did come."

"When you reached home, did you find your husband there?"

"Yis, sor."

"Was he sober?"

"He had been drinking some."

"Hadn't he been drinking a good deal?"

"He had been drinking."

"Now, didn't you say that when he was drinking that he was quarrelsome?"

"Yis, sor, sometimes."

"Wasn't he always quarrelsome?"

"Well, more or less."

"Was he quarrelsome this evening?"

"We had a few words."

"What about?"

"I object, your honor," said Vic. "The witness has answered this question repeatedly, and besides private family conversation has nothing to do with the case." Vic took a deliberate survey of the audience as he remarked, "If they had little family jars, it was nobody's business; we all have them."

"The witness may answer," said the judge.

"What was this little private conversation about?" repeated Mr. Ryan, putting into it all the irony in his system.

"Frank was sick and John wanted her to go to the saloon and get some beer, an' I didn't want her to."

"Did he try to force her?"

"He wanted to, an' I didn't want him to. She was in the next room, sick, an' he wanted to go in there, an' I didn't want him to."

"What did he do?"

"He started in."

"What did you do?"

"I tried to persuade him not to go in there."

"Then what happened?"

"The doctors come."

"No, but what did he do to you?"

"Nothing; the doctors come in just then."

"Didn't he strike you?"

"No, sor."

"Did he choke you?"

"No, sor."

"Did he curse you?"

"No, sor."

"Did he hit you more than once?"

"No, sor."

Vic was up instantly. "I want that question and answer ruled out of the evidence, your honor. The question was unfair and the witness did not understand it."

"The stenographer may read the question," said the judge.

"Did he hit you more than once?"

"Do you understand the question?" asked Judge Hindman.

"I do now, but I didn't before."

"You may answer, then."

"No, sor."

Vic dropped in his chair.

"What happened when the doctors arrived?"

"John told um he didn't need um, an' for um to leave, an' then Dr. Charts took John by the collar."

"What for?" asked Mr. Ryan.

"I don't know."

"Didn't he do that because he was beating you?"

"I don't know."

"Now what did Mr. Henry kick your husband for?"

"I don't know."

"Can't you think?"

"I don't remember."

"Isn't it a fact that you were unconscious all this time?"

"I don't know."

"You don't know much about what happened, do you?"

"I don't remember just all about it."

"Who was your husband's most intimate friend?"

Vic Noodles shot up from his chair like a Jack-in-the-box. He was startled at the suddenness of the question. It would never do for her to say, "Mr. Noodles."

"That question I object to," said Vic. "Poor Grogan is not on trial, and it has no bearing on the case."

"The objection is sustained," said the judge.

The elder Noodles noticed the startled expression on his grandson's face, and he could not help feeling just a little family pride at the way in which he instantly met the attack.

Mr. Ryan saw the situation and grinned maliciously.

"The witness may step aside," he said.

A copy of the ante-mortem statement of Grogan was handed to the attorneys for the defense; and those gentlemen asked for a recess of fifteen minutes in order to consider and argue the question of admissibility. Grandfather Noodles was summoned to his office by a messenger. After half an hour's delay, during which the judge and attorneys had left the room to consider the confession, they returned, and, as Judge Hindman had ruled that it was admissible, Vic began reading to the jury:

3 P. M., Nov. 6, 1904.

"Knowing the hand of death is upon me, and that I have but a few hours to live at most, I desire to make a statement of the facts about me being shot by Dr. Charts. I feel my faculties leaving me and trust I may be spared long enough to finish.

"I, John Grogan, have always been a peaceful, law-abiding citizen, and have never had any trouble with anybody, except Dr. Charts.

"On a former occasion we had some words over the cruel way he treated a friend of mine at the clinic, and he ordered me to leave. This I refused to do, and he attempted to throw me out. I knocked him down, and he then said that he would shoot me the first opportunity he got. He had

me arrested for assault, but I was dismissed. I never saw him any more, until he came to my house last night with a young student, who insisted on paying attention to my daughter.

"They both attacked me before I had done anything but order them to leave. After they had both struck me, I secured a knife, that my wife used to cut bread, with which to defend myself. I had no other weapon. Then Dr. Charts shot me.

"This is all that occurred, and is the truth, so help me God.

(Signed) "JOHN GROGAN."

"I hereby make affidavit that the above was given by John Grogan, in my presence, as being his ante-mortem statement of facts, in the belief that he was dying.

"NETTIE SCHAFFNER, Notary.

"Witnesses: Theodore Potts, M. D.; B. W. Emerson, M. D."

"Call Dr. Emerson."

Dr. Emerson came forward and took the stand.

"Please state your name, age, residence and occupation."

"Benj. W. Emerson; I am forty-five years of age, and live at ——— Avenue; am a surgeon."

"How long have you practiced surgery?"

"Twenty-five years."

"Did you examine Mr. Grogan before he died?"

"I did."

"Will you please state the nature of his wounds and cause of death?"

"He had a bullet wound through the right breast, just a little below the nipple, and died as the result of laceration of tissue and hemorrhage into the lung."

"Did you examine him just prior to his ante-mortem statement?"

"I did."

"What was his mental condition at that time?"

"Perfectly clear."

"It was evident to you that he would die?"

"Yes, sir; nothing could save him."

"Did you tell him so?"

"I did."

"That is all, doctor."

"We don't care to question the doctor," said Mr. Foster.

"Call Dr. Potts," said Vic.

Dr. Potts took the stand and stated that he was forty-seven years of age, lived on Fulton street, and had practiced medicine seventeen years.

"Did you see Mr. Grogan after he was shot?"

"Yes, sir. I was called to take charge of the case."

"How long were you in attendance?"

"From about eleven o'clock in the forenoon until after midnight, when he died."

"What condition did you find him in, doctor?"

"I found a very sick man—a man mortally wounded. I found him in a ward where he was disturbed by other patients, so I immediately ordered

him placed in a private room. He had a bullet wound through the right chest, in the sixth interspace, in the nipple line. I immediately ordered a special nurse for him, and at two o'clock called my friend, Dr. Emerson, in consultation. We decided that his case was hopeless."

"Who called you to take charge of Dr. Charts' case?"

"Mr. Grogan was a man who had many warm friends among his associates, and when they heard of this unfortunate occurrence they made up a purse and employed me to take charge of the case; as they were afraid he would not get proper attention. I saw the necessity of placing him in a private room, and advanced the necessary twelve dollars for the purpose. I employed a special nurse also, since the nurses in the hospital were very busy."

"Who paid for this nurse, doctor?"

"The same friends who employed me."

"Was everything done for the patient that was possible to do?"

"Yes, sir; I worked very hard to save his life, but it was impossible."

"Were you present when he made his ante-mortem statement?"

"Yes, sir. Mr. Noodles, who was summoned to the hospital to take his statement, asked me if I thought his mental condition would warrant it. I found his mind perfectly clear, and had no hesitancy in sanctioning it. He then asked me to be present and witness it."

"I will read the statement to you and ask you if it is the same that he made in your presence."

After reading the statement Dr. Potts replied that it was genuine.

"Is this signature at the bottom of this document yours?"

"It is."

"Who was present at the time?"

"Dr. Emerson, Mr. Noodles, the stenographer and myself."

"You may take the witness," said Vic to Mr. Ryan.

Mr. Foster conducted the cross-examination of Dr. Potts.

"Doctor, where did you graduate?"

"From —— Medical School."

"Are you a surgeon or a doctor of internal medicine?"

"I am a general practitioner, but I have done some surgery."

"Did you probe for the bullet?"

"I did, sir, most assuredly."

"At about what time did you attempt to locate the bullet with a probe?"

"About twelve o'clock or as soon as I had charge of the case."

"Was it necessary to perform paracentesis upon him at any time?"

"Well, I advised it, but he wouldn't submit to it."

This was a fatal blunder for Potts. He should have said that he didn't know what paracentesis meant. It has always been a hard lesson for physi-

cians to learn to say they don't know; hence they are sometimes led into traps by shrewd lawyers, who know the almost universal weakness of the medical profession and do not hesitate to take advantage of it. Mr. Foster was shrewd enough to see that he now had Dr. Potts in his power, and he went systematically and cruelly to work to carry out his plan of bringing the doctor's ability into disrepute.

"Were there any peliomas apparent upon the surface of the body?"

Dr. Potts hesitated and then said, "I think not."

"What are they an evidence of when they do appear?"

Cold beads of perspiration stood on the physician's brow. He had never heard of a pelioma in all his life. He knew the ending "oma" frequently meant some kind of a tumor, so he said:

"It indicates a tendency to tumor formation."

Foster continued his cruel tactics by asking the doctor to give him a definition of "Paracentesis."

Dr. Potts colored, stammered, and said:

"Paracentesis?—Para—centesis is a ——. It is an attempt to remove a bullet."

"Dr. Keating is an authority on medical definition, I believe?"

"Yes, sir."

"I have a copy here, and he says: 'Paracentesis is the operation of tapping a cavity of the body, as the bladder, for the purpose of evacuating fluid.'"

"Well," said Dr. Potts, "that's one meaning, and it means also tapping to evacuate bullets."

The doctor was nervous and his voice trembled so he could scarcely talk.

"I believe you said a while ago that you probed for the bullet. Now, all authorities that I have consulted condemn this practice, as unscientific and dangerous."

"That depends on how you do it," said the doctor.

"I will ask you if there is not danger in again starting hemorrhage, that nature has arrested?"

Dr. Potts was silent; he made no attempt to answer the question; and Mr. Foster did not repeat it.

"Doctor, did you stimulate your patient to overcome shock?"

"Yes, sir."

"What did you give him to counteract shock?"

"I gave him strychnia and whiskey."

"I will ask you to tell the jury what the effect of strychnia is upon the heart?"

"It stimulates the heart when the pulse flags."

"What is the effect upon the pulse when the heart is stimulated?"

"It improves the pulse."

"Doesn't it increase the pressure of the blood in the arteries?"

"Yes, sir."

"Does nature sometime arrest hemorrhage?"

"Yes, sir, very often."

"Then wouldn't stimulation of the heart with strychnia tend to start the hemorrhage again by increasing the pressure in the arteries?"

"Well, it might."

"Won't it?"

"Sometimes."

"Won't it always?"

"No, sir."

"Is not strychnia a bad thing to give in hemorrhage?"

"Not in my opinion."

"In the opinion of most authorities it is, however," said Mr. Foster. "Doctor, what is the difference between primary and secondary hemorrhage?"

"One is immediate and the other comes on late."

"After bleeding had once stopped?"

"Yes, sir."

"You probed for the bullet, stimulated the heart with strychnia?"

"Yes, sir."

"And he died from secondary hemorrhage, didn't he?"

The doctor tried to evade the question, but was finally forced to admit it.

"That will do," said Mr. Foster.

"Just a minute, doctor," said Vic.

"He would have died without the secondary hemorrhage, would he not?"

"Certainly."

"That is all."

"Call Michael O'Leary."

A short, clumsily built Irishman, smooth shaven and with gray hair, came forward clumsily in boots and took the stand. He was without coat, and his blue flannel shirt was turned down at the neck and

rolled up at the sleeves, displaying flaming red flannel underwear.

"Please state your name, age, occupation and residence," began the prosecutor in a monotonous tone.

"Michael O'Leary. Yis. Sixty-wan year, an' Oi live be the sweat ov me brow, on Campbell street."

"Did you know John Grogan?"

"Me and John wuz friends fur tin year. Yis."

"What sort of a man was he?"

"A capital foine fellow was John. Yis."

"Was he addicted much to drink?"

"Oh, he loiked a toddy once in a whoile, but a little whiskey, now an' thin, doesn't hurt an Irish-man."

"Was he quarrelsome when drinking?"

"Divil a bit! He was wan of them sweet-tempered men thot niver allowed our jokes an' gibes to worry him."

"Have you ever been to his home?"

"Yis, mony toimes; we've played sivin-up thare."

"Did he abuse his wife?"

"Divil a bit did Oi hear ov it. The ould woman wint aff to bed."

"When did you first hear of the tragedy?"

"Be the nixt day Oi wuz workin' about tin ov clock, whin Jane O'Leary, thot's me woife, came up and says: 'Moike! Have ye heerd the news? John Grogan's shot!' 'The divil!' says Oi. 'An' who shot him?' 'Two dochter,' says she. Oi threw down me tools an' says, 'Jane,' says Oi, 'Oi'm goin' to the saloon.' Whin Oi reached Duff's saloon, thare

wuz Tim Doolin an' Jake, John Monihan, Mrs. Flaherty, thot's a widder, and several min present. 'It's a shame,' said the widder. 'An' he's at the hostipittle, an' thare goin' to ampetate him for the bullit.' 'Let's get Dr. Potts—he's sich a foine docther. I am sure he can save him if ony mon can thot's livin'. Oi'll give me day's wages,' says Oi. Yis. An' several jined an' we hired Potts, tho' Oi don't know Oi loike the mon much."

"That will do, Mr. O'Leary."

Michael started away when Mr. Ryan said:

"Mr. O'Leary, you and Mr. Vic Noodles are pretty close friends, are you not?"

"We are thot."

"That is all."

Two or three more witnesses were introduced by the prosecution, to show the good and peaceful character of the deceased, after which the prosecution rested and court was adjourned for the day, after the judge had warned the jurors to talk to no person concerning the case.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE TRIAL.

When court convened upon the following day Ralph was the first witness introduced for the defense. After the usual preliminaries, he was asked to tell the story in his own way. This Ralph did, leaving out no detail and narrating the events of the fatal evening just as carefully as possible.

"You said," said Mr. Ryan, "that Dr. Charts took Mr. Grogan by the arm? For what purpose?"

"To prevent him striking his daughter, as he had his wife."

"Was that all Dr. Charts did up to that time?"

"Yes, sir, up to that moment I don't think he had spoken a word."

"Why did you kick Mr. Grogan upon the wrist?"

"Because he was choking her into insensibility."

"Mr. Grogan rushed upon you with a knife, didn't he?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did Dr. Charts order him to stop?"

"Yes, sir, but he paid no attention to it. I had the girl on my hands in an unconscious condition, and couldn't defend myself for the instant."

"Was your life in danger?"

"I object, your honor," said Vic.

"The witness may answer," promptly said the judge.

"Yes, I firmly believe I would have been killed had it not been for Dr. Charts' action."

"Did you know either of these parties before?"

"I never saw any of them except Mrs. Grogan and her daughter, and that was at the clinic in the morning."

"You never knew Frank Grogan before this?"

"I never saw her before in my life."

"Did Mr. Grogan ever meet you walking with his daughter and take her home?"

"Never."

"Did you ever see or know Mr. Grogan before this?"

"I never saw him but once in my life, and that was on the evening of the shooting."

"The daughter, Frank, has been at your house since she left the hospital, has she not?"

"Yes, sir."

"Can you explain that to the jury?"

"I felt sorry for the girl, and as she had no home—Mother and sister invited her to visit them."

"That is all."

Vic then took up the cross-examination.

"Mr. Henry, in this affair you were with Dr. Charts as his accomplice were you not?"

Ralph had emphatically denied this with indignation before Mr. Ryan could make objection to the question.

He had worded his sentence in such a manner as

to get the question before the jury before any objection could be made.

"You are a party to this affair, are you not?"

"We object, your honor?"

"You need not answer the question," was the prompt ruling of the court.

"You have been indicted in connection with this affair, have you not?" persisted Vic.

"We object again, your honor."

"The objection is sustained. Mr. Noodles, it should be needless for me to call your attention to the fact that questions of an incriminating nature should not be asked, much less answered in this court," said Judge Hindman.

"Why did you prevent Mrs. Grogan from taking her daughter before the class at the clinic?"

Ralph was horrified at the question. The answer was so plain to him that the idea had never occurred to him that anyone should not appreciate it. He answered indignantly:

"No lady should be forced to go before the class."

"How do you know that she was a lady?"

Ralph was furious. He looked Vic Noodles in the eye for a few seconds without answering. If they had not been in court there isn't the slightest doubt but what he and Mr. Vic Noodles would have come together. Ralph mastered his indignation enough to say:

"I know she is."

"How did you know it? How long had you known her?"

"I didn't know her."

"You didn't know her at all?"

"No, sir."

"And yet you knew enough about her to know that she was a perfect lady? Did you object to other women going before the class?"

"No, sir."

"She is the only one you objected to?"

"Yes, sir."

Vic didn't question him further on this point. He thought that he at least had produced a doubt in the jury's mind as to whether the witness knew Frank Grogan before this time, and he thought he had best not question him too far, for he would sooner or later give a good reason therefor.

"How did Mrs. Grogan and her daughter come to the clinic?"

"I don't know."

"Isn't it a fact that you expected to see her privately at the clinic and was disappointed that her mother came with her?"

"No, sir—and no more insinuation in regard to my previous knowledge of this poor girl will be tolerated. You will have to answer to me personally for what has already been said," said Ralph, hotly.

"Oh!" said Vic in surprise. "So you are her champion?"

"Yes, sir, I am, so govern yourself accordingly."

"A deep interest on so slight an acquaintance," sneered Vic.

Ralph was almost beside himself with anger; he was pale, and turning to the judge, said:

"Your honor, I beg the protection of the court."

"Mr. Noodles, make your questions less severe and abandon this line of examination."

"How did Mrs. Grogan and her daughter get home from the clinic?"

"I put them upon a street car."

"You put them upon a car?"

"Yes, sir, I put them on the car."

"Who paid their fare?"

"I suppose the mother did."

"Did you give her any money at the clinic?"

"Yes, I gave them car fare."

"Then you paid the car fare?"

"Well, I suppose I did."

"You told her that you would come to the house to see her daughter, did you?"

"No, I said that I would see that a physician called upon her there."

"Are you not a physician?"

"No, sir, I am a senior student."

"Then why did you go if you were not a physician?"

"Because I wanted to."

"Of course," said Vic.

"I asked Dr. Charts to see her, and he asked me to accompany him."

"You and the doctor went armed, didn't you?"

"No, sir, I was not armed."

"Was Dr. Charts?"

"Yes, sir."

"Can you explain to the jury why Dr. Charts went armed with a pistol to see a sick girl?"

"I suppose it was because he had from experience

learned that it was wise when called into certain neighborhoods."

"You suppose so?"

"Yes, sir."

"You and Dr. Charts have been warm personal friends?"

"Yes, sir."

"You and he have been together a great deal since this murder?"

"Not more than before."

"Before what?"

"This unfortunate affair. I would a thousand times rather have been the victim of Grogan's knife than brought all this trouble on the head of Dr. Charts."

The jury noticed a look of deep affection pass between the witness and the accused.

"You and Dr. Charts have discussed the affair frequently since it happened?"

"We object, your honor," interposed Mr. Foster.

"You need not answer," was the instruction of the bench.

"You kicked Mr. Grogan, did you not?"

"Yes, sir."

"What for?"

"Because he was choking the girl."

"Oh, yes," said Vic in a tone of feigned surprise. "He was choking the girl," and he placed an ugly emphasis on "the girl."

"Had he done anything to you?"

"No."

"You were taking her part, then?"

"I was, and if I hadn't done what I did I suppose he would have choked her to death."

"He hadn't struck you?"

"No, but he did his wife."

"Did he strike Dr. Charts?"

"No, sir."

"Did he touch Dr. Charts?"

"No, sir."

"Did he say anything to Dr. Charts?"

"Not that I remember, except told us to leave."

"Did you start to leave?"

"No, sir. Would you expect us to leave these women to the anger of that beast?"

"I am not on the stand," coolly replied Vic.

"He didn't strike Dr. Charts at all?"

"No, sir."

"And just at that juncture the doctor shot him?"

"He shot him when he wouldn't stop."

"Who telephoned for the ambulance and patrol?"

"I did."

"Which one did you call first?"

"The ambulance."

"And loaded Mr. Grogan in it at once and hurried him to the hospital, where he could have immediate attention in order that his life might be saved?"

"The women were taken in the ambulance and Mr. Grogan was taken in the patrol."

"What!" said Vic, surprised and apparently horrified. "Mr. Grogan was held as long as possible?"

"No, sir, he was not held intentionally."

"Who told you to telephone for the ambulance?"

"Dr. Charts."

"Then it was the doctor's fault that Mr. Grogan was not hurried to the hospital first?"

"It was not his fault. It was not anybody's fault."

"Where is Mr. Grogan's daughter?"

"She is at present at the Galt House."

"Where has she been since the death of her father?"

"She has been at my father's house."

"Did your father know her before this?"

"No, sir."

"Did your sister know her before this affair?"

"No, sir."

"She was a perfect stranger to all of you?"

"We, none of us, knew her until after I came in contact with her at the clinic; when we all became interested in her."

"Are you in the habit of taking strangers into your home and making them members of the family?"

"No, sir."

"Not unless there is good reason," observed Vic.

"The reasons were good enough in this case."

"Undoubtedly," said Vic.

"You went home to visit her on Christmas, did you not?"

"No, sir."

"You went home?"

"Yes, sir, to see my family."

"She was there, was she not?"

e

"Yes, sir."

"And you saw her?"

"Certainly."

"That is all."

"Call Miss Grogan," said Mr. Ryan.

Frank came forward and was shown politely to the witness chair.

Vic stared. He could scarcely believe that this was the same girl that he had seen at the hospital. There had been a transformation, as complete as wonderful. In place of the pale, sickly girl, she was a picture of health. Her color was heightened by the excitement, and her cheeks were no longer hollow. Her attire was neatness itself, and she was graceful and self-possessed.

She answered the preliminary questions, with a voice of such rich melody, that her every intonation was a pleasure to the ear.

Vic Noodles stared. He was never so surprised in his life; he completely lost her first answers for admiration of her voice and general appearance; and he made a hurried resolution that he would not cross-question her.

"You were at home the night your father was shot?" politely inquired Mr. Ryan.

"Yes, sir," she said, turning toward him and looking him squarely in the face.

"Will you please tell these gentlemen just what happened that night?" said Ryan, indicating, with a nod of his head to the jury.

Frank's eyes dropped as she began:

"I went to the clinic with mother, because father wished it. I was frightened and nervous, and——" Here her voice choked, tears filled her eyes and she was compelled to pause. She soon controlled her-

self, however, and continued: "Mr. Henry saw that I was nervous and asked mother to take me home, and he would bring a physician to see me there. Father had been drinking heavily, and was very cross to mother. I was sick and was asleep when the doctors came." Here she again came to a stop and was compelled to wait for several seconds before she could continue. She glanced at Bess, who had a stolid expression on her face. Bess knitted her brow, straightened up, threw back her shoulder, and attempted to say to Frank in pantomime, "Brace up."

Frank caught something of the message, straightened up, turned her eyes full upon the jury and finished her story without another quiver.

"I was asleep, when loud talking awakened me. I ran to the door and threw my arms around father, but he was so angry over something that he would not hear me. He clutched me by the throat and was choking me harder than he intended. He was so angry that he did not know what he was doing. Mr. Henry kicked him to make him let go, and then I fainted. When I came to, father had been shot." The last two or three words were barely audible; and Frank sat silently, as though her story was done.

"Did your mother insist upon your going before the class at the clinic?"

"Yes, sir. Mother didn't realize how nervous I was."

"When your father was drinking did he mistreat you and your mother?"

"Yes, sir, he often spoke harshly to mother."

"Did he ever strike or beat her?"

Frank said faintly, "Yes, sir."

"Did he mistreat you?"

After some time she said: "I was not strong and unable to help mother, and father could not understand."

Mr. Ryan did not repeat the question. She could not have answered it better than by evading it.

"Did you ever meet Mr. Henry before that day?"

"No, sir; I saw him there for the first time."

"How did you happen to go to Mr. Henry's home after the affair?"

"His sister was so kind to me; she and her mother came to the hospital and asked me to go."

"You may take the witness," said Mr. Ryan to Mr. Noodles. As he said this he turned upon that individual and stood facing him for fully ten seconds. His huge jaws seemed to say, "Now, you take the witness, and mind your manners or I'll eat you up."

Vic had recovered from his surprise, and the good resolution that had popped into his head upon first seeing her popped out again, as he remembered his duty. She was instantly transformed again into a witness; and as such, was subject to his examination. Frank had evidently made a very favorable impression upon the jury and had, by her reluctance to answer, and, by her evident desire to shield her father, admitted his guilt in a manner far more forcible than by direct accusation. Vic realized this, and was racking his brain for a convenient method of counteracting it.

He began: "You were always very attentive to your father, were you not?"

Frank's eyes filled with tears, and she sobbed:

"Yes, sir; I would have given my life for him."

The answer didn't suit Vic Noodles at all, so he said:

"Did he appreciate it? I mean when he was not drinking."

"I don't know," said Frank.

Vic was surprised at himself. These were not the questions he intended to ask at all. He would have to do better than that.

"Mr. Henry has been very kind to you, has he not?"

Frank's face flushed scarlet as she admitted the fact.

"Did it occur to you, when he invited you to his home, that you would make a valuable witness for him?"

Ralph was sitting beside his father when this question was asked. He jumped to his feet, not knowing what he was going to do or say. His father took him by the coat, pulled him back into the chair; and, putting his arm about his neck, whispered: "Not here, son. Wait until it's all over."

It had the desired effect. Ralph looked at his father in astonishment and read in his eye permission to trounce Vic Noodles after the trial. This was what surprised him so much, and he whispered: "I'll do it, sure!" His father's eye flashed back the spirit of Ralph, and then their attention was directed to Frank.

When the question was put to Frank, Mr. Foster

was on his feet to object; but a shake of the head from Grandfather Noodles, who sat where he could see the faces of all the counsel, turned him from his purpose.

Frank's eyes flashed the indignation she felt, as she said:

"I don't believe him capable of that."

Vic was not pleased. He wished the jury to see that she was unwilling to testify against Dr. Charts; as Mr. Ryan had shown her unwilling to testify against her father. He felt that her unwillingness came of a motive so pure, and was of a quality so rare that it affected the jury visibly in her favor.

"Did he discuss the case with you, while you were visiting him?"

"I never visited him; and he never mentioned the subject to me," said Frank quickly.

"He never mentioned it?"

"No, sir, not a word."

Vic was disappointed; he had hoped to secure an admission from her that they had discussed the case. He felt his weakness. Never in his life had he been at a loss in questioning a witness; but he was absolutely at sea. He felt that it was hopeless to attempt to tangle her in her testimony, and he was struggling, where it had always been play.

Frank faced him. She never took her eyes off of him during the whole time. Every time that he looked at her, he met her eye searching his face. It was disquieting, and he struggled to overcome it. He was being defeated by the witness—it would never do. The bulldog in him would not come to

his rescue, but seemed barking at him from a distance.

"Is it not a fact that you have known Mr. Henry for a long time?"

"No, sir, it is not a fact," said Frank emphatically.

Vic was nonplussed. It had seemed so easy to dissect her statements. He would embarrass her, if he could not confuse her in her testimony, but now his questions had all fled. Her open, frank and positive answers put all his questions to rout.

"Were you aware that your father and Dr. Charts were enemies?" He would try another tack.

"I don't believe it," she said.

Vic was lost again. She said it with such conviction that he felt that the jury was convinced. He had never been so uncomfortable in his life. The scene between Portia and Shylock flashed through his brain—Frank was Portia on the stand, and he was Shylock turned lawyer. That thought did not help him out any. He glanced at his grandfather, and saw him elevate his brows ever so little. He felt himself growing red, and he bit his lips in desperation.

She seemed to be watching him, as a cat watches a mouse, lest he should escape her. He felt it. She seemed to have a disconcerting answer always ready.

"Do you realize that you don't appreciate the murder of your father?" said Vic in desperation.

"I appreciate the fact that the punishment of the innocent living will not right the loss of him."

Vic was whipped, and he felt it keenly. He dis-

missed the witness, and as she left the stand, he gazed after her with a hatred that can only be appreciated by others of the type of Vic Noodles.

Frank's nervous tension was high, and when she took her seat by the side of Bess she was trembling like a leaf. Bess whispered: "Let's go out and get some fresh air."

Once out of the room, Bess said: "Frank, you are a trump! I never could have done it. I'd ascratched his eyes out."

The girls reached the hotel and went immediately to their room. Bess flung herself into an armchair and pulled Frank upon her knees. Frank's arm stole gently around Bess's neck and she whispered: "Oh, Bess, I love you so much!"

The wealth of affection in this girl was an inexhaustible mine of purity, drawn on lavishly and bestowed freely upon all about her. Hers was one of those rare natures that draw you close and make you appreciate the nobleness of the purity and simplicity of character. She seemed to impart it to you and elevate you into the sweet and rarified atmosphere of her existence. Barton Fields had suggested that it was a case of misplaced affection; but not so. Even though it had not yet centered upon an individual, it gave evidence of diffusibility that promised lasting benediction from centre to periphery of her social existence.

May the woof of her existence be woven upon the warp of a character just as strong and a soul just as pure as her own; and the fabric of their combined lives be ever free from spot or stain.

* * * * *

Dr. Fields was the next witness called, who testified to the condition of all three patients when they reached the hospital. His evidence proved the bruised condition of Mrs. Grogan and the discolored marks upon Frank's throat.

Mr. Ryan then called for Kitty Lowry.

When her name was called Vic looked up in astonishment and dismay. He thought that she was safe out of reach of the defendants' counsel; and when Kitty responded to her name, it produced nothing less than a panic in Vic's breast. There are moments in everyone's life when one calamity after another comes tumbling down upon our heads, until we almost conclude that the fates are against us. Vic was in one of those moods. His scheme of fastening a verdict upon his victim had seemed so easy when he undertook it. He had relied too much upon his own ability, or rather, he had estimated too lightly, or not at all, the occult forces that would be arrayed against him. He began to wonder now just what part his grandfather was playing in the game. The turn of events, together with the fact that his ancestor was continually present, convinced Vic that Foster and Ryan were getting outside assistance. When Kitty took the stand, Vic searched her countenance with an appeal that was pitiful.

It becomes necessary here to explain, for the benefit of the reader, how Kitty came to appear as a witness. Her whereabouts had been learned quite accidentally by Dr. Fields, while upon an ambulance run. It was immediately reported to Mr. Ryan, who went personally to see her. He told her that it

was necessary for her to testify. At first she was terror-stricken, but was assured by him that she had done nothing for which she could be blamed, and that he would fully protect her.

"We only want you to testify as to the manner of his death, for we understand that you were with him at the end."

Kitty remained silent.

"We will want you to-morrow afternoon," said he, "and it is very important that you do not notify Mr. Noodles of your intention to testify."

"Why not?" she asked immediately. "Mr. Noodles has always been very kind to me, and I would feel as though I was a traitor to him."

"Is it your desire to tell the truth in this matter, and thus save an innocent party?"

"I have no desire to tell anything but the truth. I have nothing to be ashamed of."

"Very well, then, come to my office, to-morrow at one o'clock."

"But why not tell Mr. Noodles—has he done any thing to be ashamed of?" and Kittie searched Mr. Ryan's face with alarm.

That individual shrugged his shoulders and said:

"Daughter, you have been the innocent dupe of a guilty party and I do not wish to see you imposed upon any farther. All you need do is to come and make a simple statement of what you know."

She was pale and trembling when she answered: "But I don't know anything."

"You know how he died, and there can be no harm in your telling that. I will expect you at my

office at one o'clock, then it will be unnecessary for me to send a sheriff after you."

Mr. Ryan left Kittie thoroughly frightened and, as soon as he was gone, she hastened to consult her grandmother.

The interview with her grandmother was a terrible experience for her. It lasted far into the night and, during it, Kittie learned the entire interview between her grandmother and the elder Noodles. It was a rude awakening for Kittie as the full realization of Vic Noodles' character dawned upon her, and the part she played in the affair. She unburdened her heart fully to her grandmother and then asked for advice.

"Go, daughter, and conceal nothing."

"But, mother, I am innocent of everything. I did not know that I was doing wrong."

"I know that you are innocent, child, and the important thing is for you to remain so. You have always been a brave girl, and I hope you will never be otherwise." She kissed her and bade her good night. Kittie went to bed, but not to sleep. It was a terrible struggle for her when she was alone, but by the time she had taken her place upon the stand she had mastered her feelings and was composed; though her expression told of the terrible mental anguish she had experienced.

Mr. Ryan entered at once upon the direct examination.

"Tell the jury how and when Mr. Grogan died."

"He bled to death about midnight," and Kittie shuddered and buried her face in her hands.

"Were you alone with him?"

"Yes, sir, I was alone with him at the time."

"Were you employed to nurse him?"

"Yes, sir."

Vic was trying desperately to attract her attention. She was aware of it, and purposely avoided looking at him. Mr. Ryan saw the situation, arose, and stood facing her in order to fix her attention upon himself.

"Who employed you to nurse Mr. Grogan?"

Vic lost control of himself completely and, jumping to his feet, said:

"Your honor, I object to the question."

"The question is competent," said the judge.

When Vic addressed the judge, Kittie instinctively looked at him.

His wild and terrified expression sent a pang of sorrow and pity through her. Her heart beat violently and she seemed almost choking as she struggled to fight back the tears.

Mr. Ryan repeated the question, but Kittie had absolutely no voice to answer. Her soul was terribly tried, but the words of her grandmother came to her, "I want you to remain innocent," and she said in a voice that was scarcely audible:

"Mr. Noodles asked me to nurse him."

The sensation that this answer produced was immediate and unmistakable. The effect upon Vic Noodles was as wonderful as upon the jury. The expression upon his face changed instantly to one of hatred and the eyes flashed the spirit of revenge.

Kittie was the first to observe it, and it terrified her.

"Will you please tell the jury just how it occurred?"

Vic gave her a look of defiance, but that look made it easier for her to answer; and she told in a straightforward manner all the details with which the reader is familiar.

Mr. Ryan unfolded a little note and immediately asked:

"Were Mr. Vic Noodles and John Grogan together alone at any time?"

"Yes, sir; twice during the day," was her ready answer.

"Are you a trained nurse?"

"No, sir."

"That is all," said Mr. Ryan.

Vic was breathing hurriedly in an effort to keep down his passion and control himself.

"Did Mr. Ryan call upon you yesterday in regard to testifying?"

"Yes, sir," she answered.

"Were you arrested for stealing an umbrella in a department store?" Vic meant to completely crush her, as a part of his plan for revenge.

The blow was terrible; it was so sudden and unexpected that it came like a thunderbolt, and Kittie broke down completely. Her grief was uncontrollable, but she managed to say between sobs: "I was innocent! I never took it." Vic paid no attention to her answer.

"When Mr. Ryan called to see you, did he state what he wanted you to say?"

"Yes, sir; he said he wanted me to tell exactly what happened."

"Did Mr. Ryan offer you anything to testify?"

Mr. Ryan made no objection to this question. He had formed a good opinion of Kittie and had faith in her telling the truth, and knew that if she answered this question truthfully, it would react upon the prosecution.

"No," was Kittie's reply. "He only threatened to send the sheriff after me if I did not come. I consulted mother and she told me what to do."

"So your grandmother dictated your testimony?"

"No, sir, mother did not dictate my testimony. She only advised me to come and tell honestly what I knew. I had been innocent of any intent to do wrong, and mother did not want me to become guilty by concealing anything."

Vic was in deep water and getting in deeper all the time, and, what was worse, he saw absolutely no way of extricating himself. He had meant to discredit the witness, but Kittie's innocence was so apparent that she seemed absolutely unassailable.

Vic felt as though he was the victim of an intangible something, that was slowly but surely winding its net about him. He pictured it as some terrible monster, that, invisible to him, was controlled by the defense and made to steal away his usual resourcefulness. He felt his limitations contracting in concentric rings and his horizon growing nearer and nearer. It was a constant struggle now to pro-

ceed with the case. Little did he dream that, instead of a monster of huge proportions, it was a tiny fairy of purest white—innocence—who was pinioning his hands to his side and weaving a mesh of tangles about him in a hopeless and helpless captivity.

Vic was in such a disordered state of mind that he could not think of another question to ask the witness; so, with visible confusion, he dismissed her.

As Kittie started to leave the stand, Mr. Ryan said:

"Just a moment, please. I want to ask you a question. You said you were arrested for the theft of an umbrella. How did that affair terminate?"

"I was acquitted, and then another person returned it and confessed to having taken it," said Kittie.

"Who defended you?"

"Mr. Vic Noodles."

At this juncture someone giggled loud enough to be heard all over the courtroom. It was Rastus, who had been a faithful attendant since the beginning of the trial. He had been so affected by the tears of Kittie and felt so hard toward Vic Noodles that, when Mr. Ryan turned the trick on him, Rastus saw the full import and relaxed his solemnity in an involuntary burst of feeling. He now sat perched in the window, with his hand over his mouth, badly frightened at the attention he had drawn to himself. Judge Hindman turned upon him to reprove him, but the picture was so comical that he could only smile; so he turned his attention to

the business before him without a word. Rastus quietly slipped down from the window and was lost in the crowd.

The next witness introduced was an old lady of nearly seventy years, who tottered feebly, and was assisted to the chair by Mr. Ryan.

"You will please state your name to the jury," said Mr. Foster.

"My real name," said she, "is Katherine Brierly, though I have lived for years under the name of Lowry." She sat with her hands crossed and with eyes upon the floor.

"Are you related to Kittie, or Kate Lowry, who has just testified?"

"She is my granddaughter," was the feeble reply.

"What was your maiden name?"

"Hollister. I married John Brierly in 1853."

"What became of your husband?"

"He was sent to the Penitentiary for life in 1855."

"That is all," said Mr. Foster.

Vic did not ask her any questions. He could not understand what it was all about, and so allowed her to depart.

Mr. Ryan then arose and said: "If it please the court, we have a diary here kept by Mr. John Brierly, that we wish to introduce in evidence."

Vic arose and said: "Your honor, they have just introduced a witness whose testimony was entirely foreign to the case and I made no objection, but this is too much. What has John Brierly got to do with this case?"

The attorneys all advanced to the bar, and, after some minutes spent in argument, Judge Hindman was convinced that the reasons advanced by the counsel for the defense were good; so he admitted the diary.

Mr. Ryan began reading:

“Frankfort, Ky., April 1, 1855.

“I have this day begun to live away the rest of my days inside of a prison. I am an innocent man, convicted for another’s crime, through malicious prosecution.”

“May 1, 1855.

“I to-day received the following letter from my wife: ‘Dear John—Our once happy home is gone; gone even more completely than if you and I were lying side by side in the same grave. (Would to God that such was the case.) The disgrace is unbearable. Every kindness offered by former friends is a knife thrust; each is a reminder that my husband is in prison. You might, perhaps, appreciate your liberty, but mine is bitter at such a cost. You will think strange of me when I tell you the conclusion I have reached. I don’t believe you guilty. I have spent all of our money in your defense, but now I must spend my energy in the protection of my children. The disgrace of a prison sentence, were it only for an hour, is greater than my children must inherit, therefore, since you are now in prison, I hope you may always remain there. This may seem hard to you, and yet I hasten to assure you that I

love you better than all things on this earth—except—our children. Were I childless, I would devote my life to securing your release, but with them, I shall try to prevent you ever coming into their lives. I have concluded to change my name and leave this place. I have already disposed of everything, and with the little money that I have realized I shall take our babes and will be forever lost to you and to all who knew us. This is the only letter you will ever receive from me. Accept this as the only consolation that I can give, that your wife believes in your innocence and that your children will be taught to believe that their father died a hero. The love for my children and their future happiness is greater than all other earthly considerations. I have considered murder and suicide, but have rejected them for my present resolution. Forever—you must be dead to them, though always alive and innocent to me. I, in return, will be dead to the world and alive only to them. It is absolutely impossible for me to bring this letter to a formal close, so will leave it unfinished.’”

A few minor entries were passed until one, dated April, 1862, when the following was read :

“After eight years of prison, liberty seems to be in sight. I was this morning taken into confidence by the guard with a proposal to allow us to escape upon our promise to go with him to join the forces of General Kirby Smith, who will pass near us within the next few days.”

The next entry was dated Jan. 17, 1880:

"During the fifteen years since the close of the war I have searched from city to city, under the name of John Grogan, for my wife and children. I now consider them forever lost to me and am about to marry again."

After this evidence was in, the defense announced that their testimony was complete and that they were ready for argument. It was announced that argument would begin at two o'clock, and court then adjourned until that time.

Mrs. Charts, Frank, Bess, Mrs. Henry, Ralph and his father, together with Dr. Fields, took lunch at the Galt House, while Dr. Charts was taken to the Vienna in company with the sheriff's deputy. The trial and its possibilities were little discussed at the Galt House. Every one of the party was heavy hearted. Mr. Henry was the most sanguine and tried to cheer them up, but Mrs. Charts was pale and nervous, and Mr. Henry soon abandoned his attempt. She asked if she might be permitted to attend the afternoon session, promising to control herself. Mr. Henry readily assented, and the entire party returned, at the proper hour, to the Criminal Division of the Court House Annex.

Vic dined alone and hurriedly, then went to his office, where he was busily engaged in preparing his notes for the argument.

At the appointed hour the room was packed to its utmost capacity, when Vic Noodles slowly walked in front of the jury and began his speech.

"Gentlemen—I have no desire to try your patience; so I will limit myself just as much as possible in reviewing the evidence in this case. We are prone to excuse men high in social position and to dismiss them with the idea that there can be no guilt. Juries time and again have laid themselves open to this criticism; indeed, it is a rare body of men who are able to resist this temptation and mete out justice to dignitaries.

"The evidence in the defense of the accused is meagre, indeed. Let us sum up this evidence. They have one, only one witness—the daughter, who really does not know anything at all. She gets up a little exhibition, to show you how much she loved her father, when there was constant friction and discord between them. Then, when she is questioned concerning the defendant and his partner in this crime, she gets on her dignity at once. You can certainly not have failed to notice how reluctant she was to tell anything that was likely to damage her lover and his accomplice—the defendant.

"Are you gentlemen going to be deceived by a witness whose mind has been poisoned against her own father, and made to defend his murderers? Why has she been spirited away and kept at the house of this man Henry, unless it be to mould her testimony. Do you believe that these people are in the habit of taking strangers into their house and making them members of their family? All the testimony goes to prove that she was a perfect stranger to them. Do you believe it? If you do, then answer, to yourselves, this question: Have they not a good

motive for doing so in this case? Has not the witness, Henry, admitted that the reason was good enough. Do you believe that she was a stranger to him? Do young men away from home and in the city exhibit such remarkable traits of character as this man claims for himself? I can not believe it; nor do you. Are you going to believe their statement on this point when it would not do to admit it, for the sake of his family; especially since they have been thrown together frequently since the affair. Have not both her father and mother controverted it? Did not her father say, upon his deathbed, under oath, when he knew that it was a question of only a few hours when he should meet his God—did he not say that this young fellow insisted upon paying his attentions to his daughter?

"The mother testified that her husband had taken her away from him. You men, those of you who are fathers, place yourself in poor Grogan's place; wouldn't you tremble for the safety of your daughter if she were meeting a medical student clandestinely?"

From every quarter of the room came hisses. Judge Hindman rapped for order, and said to the bailiff, "Clear the courtroom."

Grandfather Noodles nodded to the bailiff to wait, then spoke hurriedly in an undertone to the judge, who turned and said:

"There must be no more demonstration of any kind in this court or we will clear the room, if it takes all of the police in the city."

What Mr. Noodles said was, that it would prob-

ably take all of the police in the city to do it. The immense crowd of medical students listened quietly to the judge and made no further attempt at a demonstration.

"You cannot afford," began Vic again, "to give any weight to the utterances of this man Henry, who has deliberately lied upon the witness stand. Why was he so anxious that she should return home from the clinic, if it would not give him some excuse for calling on her there? Dr. Charts saw an opportunity to put his threat in execution, when Henry asked him to go; for didn't he take a pistol with him? Think of it! Took a pistol along to see a delicate, sick girl. Can you gentlemen conceive of anything more absurd? Why take the pistol, then? Ah, gentlemen, you have the secret in the dying words of John Grogan: 'He threatened to shoot me the first opportunity.'

"All the evidence points to the plan to take the life of John Grogan. The evidence, meagre though it be upon the quarrel between the men, is, in itself, evidence of some deeper trouble. There was undoubtedly more to the original difficulty or it would not have been the first thing Mr. Grogan thought of after the tragedy.

"Think of two stout men, both under forty, not being able to control an old man over seventy. Were the ages reversed it would not be quite so bad. You are confronted, gentlemen, with the proven fact that John Grogan did not so much as lay a hand upon Dr. Charts, and yet Dr. Charts fires the shot, and now has the audacity to claim self-defense. Do you

blame John Grogan for defending himself in his own home? I don't—I admire him for it—in the face of such odds. Think of the picture, gentlemen. An old man, feeble with years, trying to defend his life and perhaps the honor of his child with the only weapon he could secure, an old bread knife, and in his own home, too, against two men, either one of whom was capable of taking the knife away from him."

Vic paused. He was disheartened and struggling to conceal it; it was laborious for him to talk; somehow he felt that he had failed utterly to make out a case, and must now supply in argument what was lacking in evidence. His argument, it seemed to him, was mere harangue, and yet he must go on.

"The evidence goes to show that the first move made was by Dr. Charts taking his victim by the throat. This was made by the only competent witness to the transaction. The next move was when Henry kicked him, and they tell you that all of this was because he was choking his daughter. How improbable, for a father to choke his own child into insensibility. Do you believe it? Can you believe it? I can not. What rank cowardice to deliberately shoot down an old man, when the knife could have easily been taken away from him. I have known John Grogan for years, and I have never known him to be quarrelsome. The evidence goes to show his genial good nature; not one of the witnesses has said that he was of a quarrelsome disposition.

"I ask you, gentlemen, in the name of the law, in the name of justice, to return a verdict that will

compensate, in some small way, for this deliberate murder. Let all men stand equal in your sight. I admire the man who is not afraid; especially, not afraid to return a verdict no matter whom that verdict hurts. The law is plain. The facts have been shown to you, and your duty is clear. You are not here, gentlemen, to decide questions according to your heart, but according to your head. Again, in the name of the law, I ask you to give me a verdict."

When Vic Noodles sat down it was as quiet as death in the courtroom. Everybody was depressed at the terrible words of the prosecutor. It was some moments before anyone made a move of any kind. Judge Hindman sat bowed, with his head in his hands, until finally Grandfather Noodles slowly arose and said:

"Your honor, I have been a silent member of the counsel for the defense."

As he said this he walked, with bowed head, and slowly took a position before the jury.

Vic was thunderstruck. Could it be possible that his grandfather was going to address the jury? His heart sank, as the full realization came over him. It came as a complete surprise to everyone in the courtroom, except Foster and Ryan and Judge Hindman, who had already been informed that Eben Noodles was in the case and would make the argument.

Vic wished he had never had anything to do with it. The story his grandfather had told him of his friend in St. Louis flashed through his brain, and the entire conversation came back to him. He saw

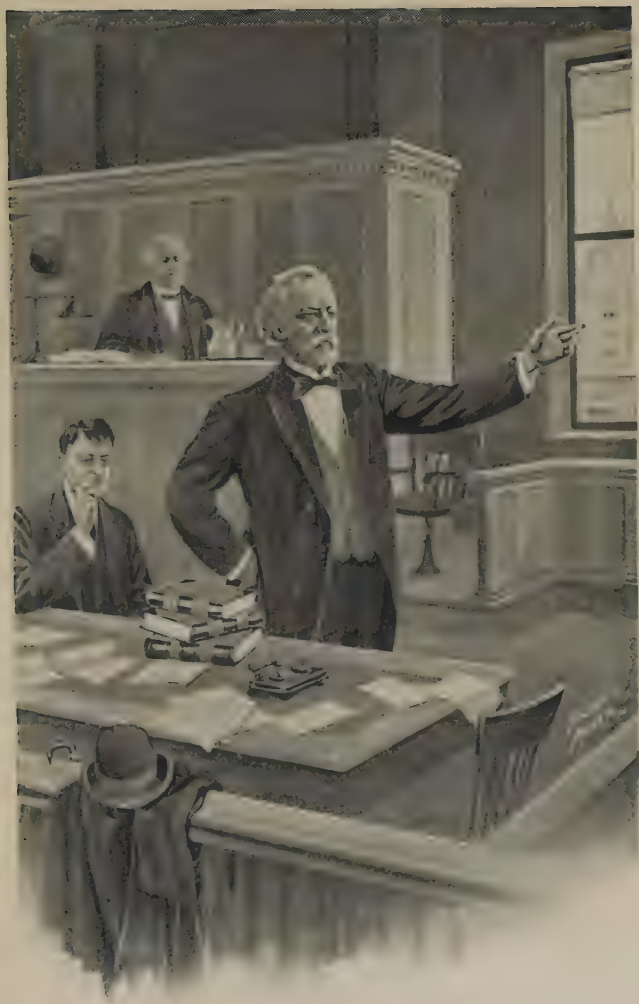
now why his grandfather was in the case. He realized that he had been a fool not to take the hint and the advantage, that was offered him by his grandfather at that time. It was too late now, so Vic moved his chair so that he would be concealed as much as possible from the view of the audience, and awaited the arraignment that he knew was sure to come. He would gladly have changed places with Dr. Charts at that moment.

"Gentlemen of the jury," began Mr. Noodles in a low voice and deliberately, "you have just been treated to the most remarkable exposition of logic that it has ever been my pleasure to listen to. You are perhaps aware that the man who has just spoken is my grandson, and I say to you, as much as it hurts me to do so, I say I am ashamed of him."

"This young man, Ralph Henry, that our prosecutor has so severely arraigned, is a young man whose character I have fully investigated since undertaking to delve a little into this case. His is a nature that is as gentle as a Southern breeze, and, like it, brings comfort and consolation to aching hearts and blasted hopes."

Grandfather Noodles was now standing erect. He ran his fingers through his silvery locks, pushing them well back out of his eyes, and continued in a firm voice:

"I see, over there, a seething, boiling lake of wriggling, miserable humanity—the sick and the afflicted. On the bank are two thousand young men, gazing indifferently upon the scene, and crying, 'Come out, if you would have anything done for you,



"'Gentlemen of the jury,' began Mr. Noodles in a low voice and deliberately."—page 279.

else die where you are.' But out of the two thousand I see one young man waded out into the mud and mire, and, stooping, lift a trembling, struggling girl in his arms and start bravely to the shore. Immediately he is beset upon all sides by those who would drag him down and stifle his young existence. In spite of the difficulties, he struggles manfully on until he lays her haggard face and gaunt form in the lap of his mother, where loving hearts and willing hands place her upon a firm footing and throw about her an impregnable barrier of defense. And for this, does he get the plaudits of the nineteen-ninety-nine? No! No! He is severely arraigned, he is reviled, he is accused of ignoble motives by one who is unworthy of him."

Mr. Noodles continued with a voice choking with emotion and tears streaming down his face. He was so affected that his trembling voice could just be heard in the deathlike stillness about him.

"How happy must be the parents of that young man. How proud I would be were I his father."

The sobbing of a woman's voice called all eyes to Mrs. Henry, whose head lay upon her husband's shoulder, completely overcome by the word painting. Judge Hindman observed the scene and was deeply moved. The jury were in tears, and there was but one pair of eyes in the house that were dry and their owner was cursing under his breath.

"As to the evidence in this case, I shall have little to say. I would not so insult the intelligence of this jury as to try to sift it. You have long since done that for yourselves. But I wish to say to you that

I have traced, like a bloodhound, the footsteps of the prosecutor in this case, and you, gentlemen, will be given the benefit of it.

“The prosecution has raved about this poor girl being taken in by charitable people, who have big hearts and are broad gauged. The motive is not open to question with such people. Would to God we could always intrust our witnesses to such care. The prosecutor, in his zeal, has neglected to show cause, why Mrs. Grogan was removed from the hospital and kept where even her daughter’s letters could not reach her; kept under the influence and power of the prosecution through the agency of a dupe, who, though innocent of any guilt, carried out his suggestions and helped to mould her story, at his dictation; incorporating one falsity after another in his insane desire to reach a verdict. John Grogan was taken to the hospital by the man who was compelled to shoot, to save the life of his friend. This young man was sent here to study and was placed directly under the care of Dr. Charts, who felt the responsibility and meant to protect the charge. While John Grogan was in the hospital, Dr. Potts appears upon the scene and has him transferred to a private room, where he can have absolute control, and employs a private nurse. Why was he placed in charge of Dr. Potts? Need I answer the question? Dr. Potts belongs, body and soul, to the prosecution. And the nurse, not a soul in the city knows her as a nurse. When Grogan is dying, Dr. Emerson, whom we all know and esteem, is called in and duped by an ante-mortem statement.

Who this nurse is, I shall tell you in a few minutes. Who can doubt the cause of death, when John Grogan was removed from the reach of the staff of skilled surgeons with which our hospital is provided, and when Dr. Potts admitted his line of treatment. Think of probing for a bullet in the chest in our modern days of aseptic surgery, and the administration of strychnia in such a case. You need only remember the doctor's testimony to come to a conclusion that he had no chance to recover. You should remember also that Mrs. Grogan and her daughter were in the hospital at this time. And were they provided with a private room and a trained nurse, by the charitable neighbors? No. They were left to the cold charities of the ward, by Vic Noodles, where, I am glad to say, they fared better.

"I say to you, gentlemen, that the whole case rests, so far as the prosecution is concerned, upon a flimsy trumped-up train of facts, purely circumstantial, and forged by a dangerous intelligence. I thank God that I am permitted to say something to prevent their being riveted upon the victim for whom they were intended. One after another, the links from the forge have been discovered by me and put together, until I have seen the whole, and been able to read the hand of the prosecutor. I have detected the artisan at work, and I have sworn a solemn oath that the crime should not again be committed in my name.

"The fates have decreed that there should exist a strange relation between the persons and the details of this case to a similar one in my life. And, as

a just retribution, the details of the former case confront and confuse me. So closely does it bear upon this case that, with the permission of the prosecution, I will relate it." Grandfather Noodles turned to his grandson with the mock request for permission, and put into the words all the irony he could command. Mr. Noodles knew that he had the prosecution absolutely crushed and in his power, and did not hesitate to take all the liberty he desired in deviating from the ordinary rules for argument in criminal cases.

"Fifty years ago I was elected Commonwealth's Attorney, and it became my duty, as I then thought, to prosecute John Brierly for murder. He, at that time, lived in one of our suburbs and was a man of considerable means. One morning, his nearest neighbor was found dead in his front yard. There were distinct marks of violence; and, as he was heard to quarrel the day before with his neighbor, John Brierly, that individual was arrested at my suggestion. I was just starting in law then, was ambitious and misguided. I wove a train of circumstantial evidence about that man that convinced the jury, and they sent him up for life. I remember that the defense put up a hard fight, but this only redoubled my efforts. He had a wife and twin babies—a boy and a girl—who were still in dresses. They were brought into court by the mother, but I made the jury see that it was done to influence them. Poor Brierly was sent up for life, after the jury had deliberated for forty-eight hours. Eleven were for the death penalty, but one stood out until

they reached a life sentence as a compromise. He was taken to prison; and I remember how elated I was at securing a verdict. Everyone thought that he would be acquitted for lack of evidence, but I made it strong. I threw my whole life into it. Nearly all of their money was spent in defense, and the young mother was left to support the children. She left her old home and the friends she had known, though they were kind and offered to help her, and disappeared so completely that no one knew where she was.

"My conscience soon began to trouble me; for, no sooner had he been taken to prison, than I began to doubt his guilt. The more I thought of it, the more I was convinced. It finally preyed upon my mind to such an extent that I resigned the office, and from that day until this I have never prosecuted nor assisted in the prosecution of a single case.

"These twin babes grew to manhood and womanhood. The son died of yellow fever in 1875. The daughter was married in New Orleans, to a man by the name of Lowry. The mother made her home with them after her son's death. In the year of 1863, John Brierly made his escape from the State Penitentiary and was never afterward captured. After serving in the remaining years of the war, he began a search for his wife and babies, who were completely lost to him. For ten years this man searched from city to city, under an assumed name; but the wife had abandoned her name and, after years of fruitless search, he gave up the task and was married again in 1880. He assumed the name

of Grogan, and was the same man who died from the pistol of Dr. Charts, who now stands accused before you. After this time, he and his wife adopted a child from the Kentucky Children's Home Society. This child was a beautiful brown-eyed, chestnut-haired girl of three years. A short time after this, Mr. Richard Coates, who now sits on this jury, called with his wife, at the office of the association, with the intention of adopting a child. While they were there, Mrs. Grogan came in for some purpose, bringing the little tot with her. When the little one saw Mrs. Coates, she ran to her crying, 'Mama!' Mrs. Coates took the child in her arms, and, after kissing her, asked who she was.

"'She was adopted from us,' was the answer of the superintendent.

"Mrs. Coates became so attached to the child, that she immediately began negotiations with Mrs. Grogan for her release. Mr. Grogan refused, and the society, seeing the splendid opportunity that the little one was missing, brought suit to recover possession. I was employed, by Mr. Coates, to assist in the suit. The case was in the courts for a year, and finally lost. Think of what this girl's life has been, and think what it would have been with the culture and money that was offered it. A good home on one side and poverty on the other; a loving, tender mother instead of the cruel, unsympathetic woman; warm clothing and plenty to eat instead of insufficient protection and hunger; a well-directed education instead of neglect and ignorance; gentle protection from loving hearts instead of abuse. This girl

would have grown up a delight to her foster parents and prepared for a station in life commensurate with her origin and ability. Her father was a clergyman of note, who lost his wife at the birth of this child, and, dying soon afterward, she was left an orphan without a relative. She was taken in by the association and placed in the hands of Mr. and Mrs. Grogan, at their solicitation. She was not mistreated by her new parents at first, but after this time John Grogan began drinking, and became improvident and a drunkard. The girl, who has been on the witness stand before you, as Frank Grogan, is the same child, raised in surroundings, the poverty of which you cannot imagine, until a short time ago, when she was taken in and cared for by Mrs. Henry. She had scarcely enough clothing to protect her; and such clothing—I have a dress she wore. I wish it did not exceed the bounds of propriety for me to show it to you. I will tell you, after a little while, how it came into my possession.

“Mr. Grogan’s first wife, Mrs. Brierly, lived in New Orleans with her daughter after her son’s death. They came back to Louisville in 1888, on account of the son-in-law assuming a position with the L. & N. R. R. This daughter and her husband, whose name, as I have already told you, was Lowry, were both killed in the great cyclone, leaving an only child named Kathrine. Mrs. Brierly took charge of the little one and supported her. She moved from one part of the city to another, assuming the name of Lowry, until she finally located on Campbell street. This child grew up and finally became the

only support of her aged grandmother. This child, Kathrine Lowry, or Kittie, as she is familiarly known by her associates, is the girl who nursed Mr. Grogan at the hospital—her own grandfather. Since the tragedy, Mrs. Grogan has been spirited away from the hospital and placed in the home of Mrs. Lowry, where the Commonwealth's Attorney could have control over her, through the agency of Kittie, who seems to be an especial friend of the prosecutor. Mrs. Lowry has been in poor health, and Mrs. Grogan was taken there, ostensibly to nurse her. Little did she think that she was nursing her husband's first wife. For the last four years John Grogan has been living in the same section of the city as his first wife and neither of them knew it.

"I discovered some time ago that my grandson was imbued with the same unholy ambition that placed an ineffaceable stain upon my life and that ruined the lives and blasted the hopes of a happy family. I say I discovered, quite accidentally, that he was forging fetters exactly as I had done. I immediately began to lay a countermine. I have tried in every way to turn him from his purpose; but failing, I have resorted to this drastic procedure. The facts that I have related to you were revealed one after another as the result of my investigation. Night before last I called upon Mrs. Lowry and acquainted her with all of the details; hearing from her lips the story of her struggles and sorrow." Here Mr. Noodles broke down completely, and was absolutely unable to proceed for some moments. He sank into a chair, and bowing his head upon a table, wept bitterly.

Vic arose and, with eyes upon the floor, silently left the room.

When Grandfather Noodles was able to resume, he said:

"Upon leaving her house, I wandered about the neighborhood until I found the house in which they had lived. It had been unoccupied since the tragedy, and I entered and searched the place. It was here that I secured the worn and tattered dress that was worn by Frank Grogan, whose true name was Elizabeth Campbell, until adopted legally by the Grogans, who named her Frances and then contracted it to Frank. I found, while searching the house, a box on the upper floor that had been broken open by thieves. In it I found the suit of stripes in which Brierly had escaped from prison. In a pocket of an old coat I found a diary, yellow with age, that told the story of his escape and struggles up to the time of his second marriage."

During this recital there was deathlike stillness in the room. So immovable were the spectators, that it reminded one of the work of some wonderful sculptor, who had made the group of marble.

"There is little more for me to say. I feel that my work is done. I am thankful that I have been spared until this time, and, though years have passed and I cannot undo the wrong, my remaining years shall be spent in giving these two girls the best education and all the comforts that money can buy; and, when I am gone, I shall have seen to it that they are amply provided for. And you, gentlemen, I ask you to spare my gray hairs any further sorrow. Make my plan complete by returning a verdict of ac-

quittal; for I assure you that, were it not for the evidence produced by the machinations of your prosecutor, this case would never have been before you. I implore you to not pile one crime upon another, but to administer the rebuke that should have been given to me."

Mr. Noodles sat down and still the rigidity was continued.

Judge Hindman finally lifted his head slowly, and said:

"Gentlemen of the jury, I have few instructions to give you. I would not deprive you of the pleasure by giving you peremptory instructions. Retire, and, as soon as possible, return such a verdict as your hearts may desire."

Slowly the jurors filed into the jury room. Grandfather Noodles still sat with his head bowed to the table. The group shifted positions slightly and assumed the attitude of expectancy.

They had not long to wait before there was a rap at the door of the witness room. The bailiff answered the summons and announced to the judge that the jury had reached a verdict. He opened the door and the jurors filed back and remained standing. The foreman handed a piece of paper to the bailiff, who delivered it to the clerk; who, when he received it, arose and read:

"We, the jury, find the defendant not guilty of the charge preferred, as charged within the indictment."

The enthusiasm of the students had been held to the limit. The tension would no longer stand repression. The sculptured group sprang at once into

life and activity, and one great cheer arose from the boys. Judge Hindman made no attempt to repress the demonstration, and it subsided as suddenly as it arose.

Thus has the pendulum of human affairs swung again to the credit side of the case in its tireless song of debit, credit, debit, credit, demonstrating once more the old saying, that right will prevail in the end. Though years had passed without compensation by the pendulum, and the injury done John Brierly seemed likely to go on forever without a turn in favor of justice, at last before it was everlastingly too late, the fates have gathered the scattered fragments and placed them again on the right and to the credit of his descendants.

CHAPTER XXVII.

BENEVOLENT DUPLICITY.

On the morning after the trial, Grandfather Noodles reached his office late and found Mr. Richard Coates waiting.

"Good morning, Mr. Noodles," said that gentleman.

Mr. Noodles returned the greeting cordially and invited Mr. Coates into his private office.

"I want to thank you," said Mr. Noodles, as he offered him a great armchair. "I want to thank you for returning the verdict you did yesterday. It was a great victory for justice." Mr. Noodles was silent for a few minutes, then said: "I had a selfish motive in it also. You have helped me to administer a rebuke to my grandson that was much needed."

There was a twinkle in the old gentleman's eye as he referred to the subject.

"You have only yourself to thank," said Mr. Coates. "We could not well do otherwise after the picture you painted for us. We were all wonderfully affected at your sorrow and confession. Few men are strong enough to lay open their souls to others in a matter of conscience. Your motives,

however, were so pure and unselfish that the impression will last as long as I live."

"That grandson of mine has within him the making of a great rascal," said Mr. Noodles with a rising inflection.

"The tendency may have been in that direction," responded Mr. Coates, "but with the influence of your example before him, it ought to work out his personal reformation. But I came to consult you in regard to the future of Frank Grogan. If it can be arranged, Mrs. Coates and I would like to have Frank come to us, and, if there are no legal obstacles, we would like to adopt her and make her our heir."

"I will look into the matter," said Mr. Noodles. "I have no doubt it can be arranged. I will have a consultation with Mr. Henry and the girl, and will notify you at the earliest possible moment. There is one matter, however, that must be fully understood between us, and that is, that I must have the direction of her education. Not but that I have the fullest confidence in you, Mr. Coates, but as a pleasure to me in my later days. You are indebted to me to that extent."

"We will gladly comply with that requirement," said Mr. Coates.

As soon as Mr. Coates had left the office, Mr. Noodles went to the 'phone, and, calling Foster and Ryan, said: "I wish you would have Mr. Barry come to my office, as I have a commission for him."

He then wrote the following letter, which he placed on the desk in his grandson's office:

"My Dear Son:—At eight to-night, I will be in the office alone. I wish you would meet me there to discuss matters of interest to both. Affectionately,
"YOUR GRANDFATHER."

Mr. Barry now entered the office, and Mr. Noodles began at once:

"I have a commission for you. I propose to make you guardian for Kittie Lowry. You are to execute the following wishes for me: First, I wish you to arrange for Mrs. Grogan and Mrs. Lowry, or Mrs. Brierly, to live together, and see first of all that they are comfortably fixed. Mrs. Grogan is to be the housekeeper and Kittie is to live with them. This you can undertake at once. As soon as the court makes the proper appointment, I shall settle a sufficient sum of money in the Fidelity Trust Company for their support. You are to be the legal and business advisor of all three. I shall undertake the education of Kittie as my part. You are to keep an accurate account of your time and expenses for the first year, and after that you will be compensated at a fixed rate, until the death of both the old ladies and until Kittie either marries or becomes competent to manage her own interests. I would appreciate it if you would consult me on important matters."

Mr. Barry thanked him profusely for the confidence and withdrew.

When Vic Noodles entered his office at noon and had read his grandfather's note, he sat down to

ponder over the probabilities of the interview. "What could his grandfather have to say except to lecture him upon morals?" He was in no mood for a Sunday school oration upon his wickedness. He knew the senior Noodles had detected him in his work and had circumvented it, but he would not brook insult added to injury in the shape of a discourse upon righteousness.

"The old gent's getting pious in his old days. However, I may as well go and have it out with him. If I don't like the conversation I can leave. One thing is certain; I shall move my office and come down town to live. He has humiliated me enough already, and I will not stand for any more of it."

That evening at the appointed hour, Vic entered the office and found his grandfather seated in the great armchair.

"Come, son, pull that easy chair up to the fire."

"Never mind," said Vic. "I'll just stand here until you finish," patting his foot with impatience.

"Very well. I have no desire to inflict anything of a confidential nature upon you."

Grandfather Noodles carefully selected a cigar from the case and, lighting it, placed his feet high upon the mantel and sat in silence, sending one ring of smoke after another toward the ceiling. Vic waited for several minutes and then realized that if his ancestor was to do any talking he would have to assume a different attitude.

"People often miss many good things by being

combative and forbidding. You should learn, son, to put yourself in a receptive attitude."

Vic quietly took the seat indicated and awaited his further pleasure. Eben Noodles took out his case and offered him a cigar.

"No, thanks; I don't care to smoke."

"Come, come, son; take a cigar. It may steady your nerves."

There was something strange in the words and the manner of utterance. Vic glanced at his grandfather and read an expression that he had never seen before. He took the cigar and sat down. After more minutes of silence Eben Noodles said, as he started a column of smoke toward some imaginary object upon which his attentions seemed fixed:

"What did you think of my defense?"

"I was very much surprised to see you enter the case at the eleventh hour."

Grandfather Noodles spat out the remaining smoke with an explosive puff and sat upright, saying:

"At the eleventh hour, eh? You say the eleventh hour? Does it appear to you that I waited until the eleventh hour? I gave you credit for more acumen."

"Well, you might have had some consideration for the feelings of one of your own flesh and blood," said Vic.

"You were accorded the same consideration you showed me."

"But, father, I have been made a fool of, and by you."

"You mistake the agency, my son. You should read Burns:

'Tho' honest nature's made ye fools,
What sairs your grammars.
Better ta'en up spades and shools
An' nappin' hammers.'

"You have made a fool of yourself; I have just been trying to undo it. I saw what you were up to and set about thwarting you, in the manner most likely to succeed.

"I want to warn you about undertaking to prove your case by wholesale false evidence. That should be left to a skilled artist. You are too clumsy at it, my son. You should have served a long apprenticeship before undertaking it, and then it must be done judiciously. It will not do to introduce manufactured evidence wholesale—anyone can see through that. You should make it such an admixture of the true and the false that no one can draw the line of demarcation. I once went to see the famous painting of the Battle of Gettysburg. There was a cannon in the picture, which was part wood and iron and the rest painted on the canvas. No one could tell where the real ended and the false began. I have always remembered that. The cannon, all on canvas, would not have excited my admiration; and the cannon real would have been commonplace, but composite—flesh and spirit—reflected the artist back of it.

"Your talents, my son, I will admit, are above the

average; but it is the man and the horse that is above the average that is just fast enough to lose in a doubtful game. It takes genius alike to finish a cannon with paint and to gamble successfully. This country has produced talent of all kind, but the Nestors are few. Had you been successful in this case, your life might have been ruined. It was a great risk, my son. You did not appreciate the danger you were in, but it gave me no end of concern. I have found that such tactics do not pay; they lead to ruin. This I learned early in life, and I have made use of the praeice on but two occasions. The first, I reported in this case; the second, you should be aware of, but it seems that it has not yet dawned upon you."

Grandfather Noodles now resumed his smoking to allow the suggestion to work.

Vic turned and searched his grandfather's face, but could make nothing of it. The old gentleman sat smoking, with as fixed an expression as would be found upon the "Great Stone Face" Vic sat reflecting. "You should be aware of." Why? Gradually it began to dawn upon him what this grandfather was driving at. He turned again to survey the old gentleman, who continued smoking indifferently. Vic gazed at him with open-mouthed astonishment, and then said:

"And so all this wonderful story is a myth?"

"There, you do my genius injustice again, my son. Were it all myth, it would have been clumsy enough to have attracted your attention. I see I must outline my position to you. There are the elements of

truth in it. There was enough, at least, to make the story reasonable, and plenty to make sure of the jury. I have been absolutely honest in my motives, but could not resist the temptation once more to make use of such rich opportunity to juggle events; especially since it could be productive of nothing but good. My first desire was to beat you at your own game—to whip you with your own weapons, and then have the secret satisfaction of telling you how it was done. I have been thinking for some time of retiring from practice, and it seemed to me that this was my last chance to conquer you.”

“But, father,” said Vic, “didn’t you ever convict John Brierly on circumstantial evidence?”

“Circumstantial and manufactured, yes. He went to the Penitentiary, where he died, as I learned in a letter from the warden.”

“Where he died?” said Vic in surprise. “I thought he escaped. Who, then, was this man Grogan?”

“He was John Grogan, once and always the same Irishman.”

“Was Mrs. Lowry Kittie’s grandmother, and was she the wife of John Brierly?”

“She was.”

“Then how in the world did you get the letter she was supposed to have written to her husband in prison?”

“She told me about the letter during my interview with her on the night before the trial, and I reconstructed it.”

"Did you tell her all this story about John Grogan being her husband?"

"I did, on that night."

"You villain," said Vic.

"A rather harmless villain, don't you think, since I have provided so well for her? You forget the adage concerning glass houses."

Vic made no reply. He was fascinated by the wiles of the old gentleman. Finally he said:

"How about that suit of stripes?"

"What suit of stripes?" asked his grandfather.

"Why the suit you found in Grogan's home and was the connecting link between John Brierly and John Grogan."

"Discovered at last," said Grandfather Noodles, tragically. "When I had advanced in my investigations so far as to learn that John Brierly died in prison, the thought flashed through my brain that the relation between the parties concerned in this affair was peculiar, and it then occurred to me that, by injecting a little, I could make a wonderful story that would do no one any harm, would fascinate and hold the jury, and would, at the same time, 'Out-Herod Herod.'"

"Let it be an object lesson to you, my son, and let it illustrate the fact well established, that if a lawyer resorts to tricks, tricks will be played against him.

'The best-laid schemes o' mice and men
Gang aft agley.'"

"It seems, then, that you were more intent upon beating me than sincere in your motives about preventing a crime being committed."

"You misjudge me again; the lesson I learned from Brierly was a bitter one, and was sufficient to justify me in resorting to any means to frustrate its repetition. The end, my dear son, justifies the means just so long as that means does not react to the disadvantage of the innocent. I defy you to point out where or how the means in this case has harmed a soul."

"But it was unnecessary, father."

"Am I to be lectured by my own grandson? Do you mean to justify the 'means' you resorted to? Was your scheme necessary? Has it not yet occurred to you that your plan made mine necessary?"

"I hope you will learn from this, Vic, that you do not possess your grandfather's genius in this one particular. That family gift has become attenuated from non-use, and the older you grow the more you will thank me for having used it so effectively. Some day you will realize fully that I have rescued you from the 'Tarpeian Rock.'"

Vic was submissive. The questions that he propounded to his grandparent were no longer argumentative, but were prompted by interest and a desire to sift the truth in the story as told to the jury.

"Is Kittie John Brierly's granddaughter?"

"Yes, and I have arranged for her and her mother to live together. Mrs. Grogan will keep house for them."

"Well, father, how about Frank? How much truth was there in the orphanage story?"

"That is correct. Frank is the same girl. That was a strong point in the story."

"And is she provided for?"

"She will live with Mr. and Mrs. Coates."

Vic arose and, advancing, seated himself upon the arm of his grandfather's chair, saying:

"Dad, you are a trump! What would you have me do?"

"Stick to the right. Look with charity upon even the guilty. I promise you my support in all your undertaking. I shall keep an eagle eye upon you, however, and if ever again you try the prank, you will find me arrayed against you. Come, now, let us go to the Old Inn."

The next day the morning papers announced that Mr. Vic Noodles had resigned the office of Commonwealth's Attorney. The paper continued:

"He will become a member of the firm of Noodles and will hereafter devote his time exclusively to their affairs. The step has been taken at the urgent solicitation of the senior member of the firm, Mr. Eben C. Noodles, who will retire from active practice."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE SIEGE CONTINUED.

After the trial, Frank returned with Bess to Centreville, where she again took up the campaign which she had abandoned so abruptly. She was to spend the Summer here before taking up her residence with the Coates in the Winter. Her time was not spent in idleness. She studied hard and made rapid progress, both in school and in her music.

One of the first things she did upon her return was to organize and drill a children's choir. She had come to be known and loved by every child in the village, and she soon learned that through the hearts of her little friends she was fast gaining ground in the affections of the community. She was unconsciously aware of this. I say unconsciously, because she had no motive in her work with her children other than the love of them and her passion for music. Her native innocence and sincerity—her energy and modesty—intrinsic and unstudied—was a powerful weapon which battered down battlement after battlement and compelled the submission and allegiance of the garrison.

She had been able to select eleven children, who were possessed of more than average ability, for her choir. Of this number, six were girls ranging in

years from ten to sixteen. She wanted one more boy, but though she had searched the town, she had been unable to fill the last place, and had about given up the idea of an equal division of voices, when an unexpected incident threw her in the path of success.

She and Bess were returning from the village one afternoon, when, as they were passing an old mill, they were attracted by a childish voice singing lustily:

“Oh, raley come paley,
Come stoney me die,
Me sonny dog lather,
And booweegie I;
I’m far away home
On a sailor bamboo,
Me sonny dog lather,
And booweegie U.”

Bess stopped the team suddenly, and said, laughing:

“There’s the rest of your choir.”

Frank was all attention, when, presently, a little dirty, freckle-faced, red-headed chap, with cap set jauntily on one side, came around the corner of the mill. He was doing a combined side-step and double shuffle with his bare feet in the sawdust, keeping time with the song. He held aloft a crooked stick fishing pole, from which dangled a tiny sunfish. Suddenly the song ceased and he dived into the dust,



"There's the rest of your choir."—page 303.

raised his heels in the air, and walked about on his hands for a moment, turned a hand-spring and confronted the girls in great astonishment. Frank clapped her hands in applause. The youth paused, surveyed them for an instant, then his face lighted, and coming close to the carriage, said:

"I got a feesh. I jus' kotch him. I spit on the bait."

"Was that why you were singing?" asked Frank.

"Yep. I never kotch none before."

"That is doing fine for the first time."

"Nuh, that ain't the first time I gone feeshin'. Done gone lots of times. But I never spit on the bait before. Johnny Long, he told me."

"What is your name?"

"Barnum. But that ain't my name. They jus' calls me Barnum. I got a brother. He's the twin. They calls him Bailey."

"Barnum and Bailey! Well, you are a circus. What is your real name?"

"Simmins."

"Can your brother sing?"

"Nope; Bailey can't talk plain. He's got a hole in his mouth."

"Would you like to learn to sing?"

"Can't. I don't know how."

"I will teach you," said Frank, with her most winning smile.

"Dad's drunk and hain't got no money."

"Oh, but you don't need any money," she answered.

He looked at her in astonishment.

"Would you like to learn and sing in my children's choir?"

"Say, I hearn about them. Them's Presbyterians. I'm a Baptist. I wuz a Presbyterian, tho', once. Las' Christmas they didn't give me no candy. I went a whole month before Christmas, too, and then when they had their 'ntertainment, they didn't call off my name, 'n next day, Johnny Long told me they did call my name at the Baptist 'ntertainment, and that they had a big poke for me, an' if I'd go 'round, maybe they'd saved it for me. I got it, 'n then I give Johnny half of it fur tellin' me, 'n I'm a Baptist now."

"Well, that doesn't make any difference. Some of my children are Baptist. I want you to come out to Mr. Henry's to-morrow afternoon, and I will give you your first lesson. Do you know where Mr. Henry lives?"

"Is it where all them good apples grows in Summer?"

Bess laughed heartily, thinking that she, as well as Frank, had made a discovery. "Yes," she answered, "and if you will come out I will give you a basket of apples."

Barnum kept his appointment, and Frank found the child possessed of a good mind, quick and eager to learn and with a remarkably sweet voice. Her choir was now complete, and she set to work diligently to get them in shape.

Many hours every day she worked with her children in the village at the home of Mr. Dobbs.

On Saturday afternoons, she assembled the entire

choir and taught them the rudiments of vocal music as a class. Barnum was the happiest of the lot. One day she asked him if he could write the notes on the board.

To her great astonishment, the lad went to the board, and, taking the chalk, squinted up one eye, and without a ruler, shot a line across the board as straight as an arrow. This he paralleled; and the five lines and four spaces were finished almost in a twinkling. As he gave a flourish to the sign of the treble cleff, he grinned and said:

"That's putty nigh's crooked as my fishing pole."

So true were the lines and so neat the symbol that Frank stood in wonder at the little freckle-nosed urchin, who, totally unconscious of the effect he had produced, stood waiting upon one foot for the dictation.

"Why, Barnum!" exclaimed Frank, when she had somewhat recovered from her surprise. "That is better than I could do."

A gleam of pride flashed in the eye of the lad as he said:

"I dun practiced on the plasterin' at home."

It was evident to Frank that she had here a bundle of undeveloped talent of a high order, and she resolved to sound the lad in other lines and determine, if possible, the range of his genius.

Simple airs were written, which the children sang, and since she had picked her class, they made rapid progress.

Gradually the entire community learned to know

and to love Frank. One after another of her former foes surrendered to her innocence and charm. There was one redoubt, however, which was still impregnable, wherein Miss Shipp found herself at last, commanding only Quaker guns, all the genuine articles having been captured by Frank.

Frank was daily under the instruction of the Rev. Mr. Dobbs, who had plenty of leisure and who took a genuine interest in her. He took upon himself the task of building her education upon a firm foundation. In addition to the recitations held alone in his presence, she took long walks in the field and forest with him. Upon these trips she was always accompanied by Bess and Mr. Springer. It was in this way that she gained a considerable knowledge of botany, geology and even zoology. Mr. Dobbs was an enthusiastic botanist and was well versed in the other sciences.

These walks and talks afield were made doubly delightful and instructive by the constant association with Mr. Springer, who talked of music and art, with which his mind seemed a never-ending storehouse.

Frank noted with much pleasure a changed attitude toward the Henry family. She was secretly overjoyed also to note that Mrs. Henry had regained her former lightness of heart and seemed as happy as when Frank first saw her. And indeed this was not without good cause, for as Frank met from time to time the same persons who had been so rude to her friends, she thought she detected an attempt at conciliation. That they were ashamed of their

actions was quite apparent. Slowly but surely they came to the realization of the fact that they had been led astray and to the commission of gross insult by one individual. And slowly but surely it was recoiling upon the head of Miss Shipp. No one was ever quite able to fathom the motive which lay behind the movement. Certainly it was not jealousy, nor revenge, nor yet the hope of personal aggrandizement, nor innate perversity of human nature. It was the manifestation of vestigial aristocracy.

Father Time has been whittling on the stick of aristocracy for many ages and, while he has greatly reduced its proportions, has been unable to eliminate it altogether. In the remotest districts its snobbing influence is still to be felt. The world seems reluctant to relinquish the feudal lord and the cavalier. It is so inborn that I fear it will ever persist if even only as a vestigial or rudimentary structure. And so long as it exists it will combat modern thought and modern standards. It needs but little motive, other than what it deems encroachment upon time-honored lineage. It matters little what there is, tangible, to sustain it; and, like a viper, ruthlessly stings society in defense of its own inalienable rights.

The tendency has ever been a leveling one, with one, and only one, title: The Noblemen of Ability. These are, and have been, ever rising to variable heights, though chained to the ball of caste and lock-stepping with the lowly born. Some master pencil will draw a cartoon having for its theme this idea; wherein the mill stone which hung about the neck

of society will show gradual transitions into a bauble of adornment.

And so Miss Shipp was the incarnation and the exemplification of its vituperative workings, none the less venomous, for being rural.

The neighbors of Mrs. Henry broke away from the ranks of Miss Shipp, not because they had discovered some ulterior motive in their leader, but because Frank's conduct, her sacrifice of self, her almost idolatrous worship of her benefactors, forced from them admiration and respect. Or in other words, the same influences which have operated for ages to uplift humanity in general was seen here in its application to the individual. It forces us to the conclusion, then, that we are not bad by nature, but on the contrary, are, in tendency at least, innately good. And that we rise in the scale of character as our inherited prejudices are forced from us.

The wife of the county judge drove to the home of the Henrys and frankly confessed the grossness of her conduct through misunderstanding of conditions and begged forgiveness of Mrs. Henry, while Mr. Henry and the judge adjusted the politics of the county, State and nation over their cigars on the front porch.

And thus the days passed very happily for Frank. She wrote regularly to Ralph, telling him of her rambles through the fields. Such long and interesting letters they were, too,—how kind Mr. Dobbs was—and how she enjoyed the society of Mr. Springer—what a wonderful talent he had—how

well he was educated, et cetera, until Ralph, in a perfect panic invariably wrote her a cruel letter in return and then as invariably tore it up.

Frank was a total stranger to jealousy, and Ralph was aware of it; hence he always grew ashamed of himself whenever he allowed the green-eyed monster to take possession of him. His letters; when they reached Frank, were always a source of much delight. More, even, than she would dare admit. Notwithstanding her evident enjoyment of the society of Mr. Springer, she counted the days until Ralph would come, dreaming vague dreams of added happiness in which Ralph played the important role of guide.

CHAPTER XXIX.

CAPITULATION.

It was a beautiful night in June when the Henrys were seated upon the front porch enjoying the evening air. Everybody was happy over Ralph's return. Frank was dreamily building castles under the charm of his voice. The cat purred softly on her shoulder. She stroked his fur and thought of her friends, her life and how happy she was. Bess sat with her head reclining on her father's shoulder, occasionally taking his cigar out of his mouth and knocking the ashes against the rail. Mrs. Henry's eyes were constantly upon her son, as she contrasted this visit with a former one. How happy they were to be all reunited and free from fear and sorrow. All listened but Ralph, who was relating the details of contest for the honors of his class. Bess was contemplating the happiness of the family and the serenity of the evening, when suddenly there came floating through the evening air the clang of a bell.

"What's that?" cried all in unison.

Faintly, but distinct, came again at the interval of several seconds, the deep intonation of :

"The Presbyterian Bell."

"Who can it be?" They looked at one another in mutual inquiry.

A horseman was heard riding hard on the pike. He was coming from the village. Ralph hurried down to the gate, followed by Frank. The horseman reined up and said:

"Preacher Dobbs is mighty sick, and he asked me if I would ride out and ask the young ladies would they mind coming in to see him."

Ralph noticed the white upturned face of Frank and assisted her to the porch. Mr. Henry ordered the carriage at once, and in silence and fear for the worst the entire family drove rapidly into the village.

In the belfry of the village church sat old drunken Lud Simmons, with bowed head and thoughtful brow. Strange as it may seem, the village drunkard was the church sexton, kept in his humble position solely by the friendship of the good Mr. Dobbs. Between these two men there existed a strange intimacy. There was a common bond of sympathy, that created a lasting friendship.

"Old Lud," as he was called, drunk as usual, sat tolling the bell for the departed soul of his only friend.

Poor Mrs. Dobbs was in a pitiful plight. Absolutely dependent upon her husband, who even did her thinking for her, she lay stunned at the suddenness of the blow. Everybody came and offered consolation; words, words, and left. Frank took charge of the house, nor did she leave it, except to assemble her children's choir and train them for the last service. As she went noiselessly about the house, with her pale, tear-stained face, doing for

everybody, she so engraved herself upon the hearts of the congregation that Deacon Roach took his wife aside and whispered something in her ear. Then Mrs. Roach went to where Frank was adjusting some flowers, and, taking both hands in hers, said with tears in her eyes:

"Frank—it's—it's—too—bad, isn't it?"

As Mrs. Roach paused in her speech, Frank slipped her arm about her waist, when she added:

"Can I come to see you?"

Deacon Roach smiled and nodded his approval, and added:

"I reckon I'll come, too."

Miss Shipp didn't call at the house. She inquired of all that transpired and, upon learning that Frank was in charge, froze up in her retreat.

It was a sad hour in the village of Centreville when the funeral cortege started for the little church. Ole Lud announced the start with measured beats of the hammer. For the first time in years, Lud Simmons was sober.

The little chapel was filled to overflowing, when the mortal remains of Mr. Dobbs were carried by loving hands up the centre aisle and deposited before the altar.

The Baptist minister of the village conducted the services. And the village really and truly mourned the loss of a man who had won public esteem that had endured throughout a quarter of a century.

"He was a man, past seventy, who still read his classics in the original," said the preacher in a few

remarks at the close of a touching eulogy.

Frank attempted to sing, but her voice was so broken and she had so much difficulty in controlling her emotions that she finally desisted and relied on her children's choir, all of whom, but one, had been baptized by the good minister.

When Frank quit singing, the little freckled-nosed Barnum took up the air and in a clear, sweet, childish voice, led the choir through that beautiful old hymn, "Lead, Kindly Light."

The effect cannot be imagined. Stalwart, dry-eyed men succumbed and bowed their heads to conceal their weakness.

Suddenly a wail, as of a lost soul, swept the chapel, and instinctively all eyes glanced toward the gallery, where Old Lud always slept during sermons. His shaggy head lay on the gallery rail and was shaking with convulsive sobs. The tears zigzagged down his long beard as he lay crushed under a mountain of emotion. When the service was over, he appeared at the green doors for a last look at his departed friend. Remembering the peculiar friendship that had existed between these men, the crowd made a way respectfully. The old man paused an instant at the casket and then glanced at the choir. As he passed slowly out, he was seen to reach down, grasp the little neglected Barnum in his arms and hold him in a tight embrace; then—kissing the child—he passed quickly out and to his home.

Lud Simmons was never known to take a drop of liquor from that day. Moreover, his twin boys were placed in school and better dressed. The old

man went to work, and, in a remarkably short time, it became a respectable family.

Miss Shipp, unable longer to stand the strain, arrived late at the funeral. All her animosity faded away when Barnum's childish soprano took up her favorite hymn.

When Frank passed out Miss Shipp stopped her, and, taking her hand, gave it a gentle pressure, but did not trust her voice.

Frank returned to the house, while the Henrys drove home in the late afternoon.

CHAPTER XXX.

AN UNFINISHED CHAPTER.

Mrs. Dobbs was somewhat consoled upon the following day by the arrival of a sister, who had arranged to stay indefinitely. Mr. Springer had called to offer his services, and, learning of the late arrival, volunteered to drive Frank home. She readily consented, as there was really no need for her further services.

Frank was worn out, and was glad, indeed, to get a ride in the fresh evening air. It was so calm and serene and pleasant, and then, too, she needed a change from the depressing atmosphere of the past three days.

"Frank," said Mr. Springer, when they were once out of the village, "I am very glad, indeed, to be alone with you for a little while. I have some news for you, that I am very reluctant to tell."

She looked at him curiously.

"Is anyone sick?" she asked at once.

"Oh, no, not that; and yet it is that, too."

Frank's expression of concern caused him to add immediately:

"I have decided to go farther west."

"Oh, you are not going to leave us?"

There was so much of earnestness and surprise in

her voice that he trembled with excitement.

"Yes, my health is failing, and I fear I will not improve here."

Frank turned her large eyes full upon him and they filled with tears. So sympathetic and unsophisticated was she that she never once thought of concealing her emotions. Neither did she dream of his misinterpreting them.

"Are you really compelled to go?" she asked, showing some alarm.

"Yes—that is—there is no special hurry—only—I might not live very long in this climate," he said, slowly.

Frank shuddered perceptibly. The sudden fate of her friend, Mr. Dobbs, was fresh in her mind, and she mentally pictured a repetition with Mr. Springer.

"Oh, Mr. Springer, do go at once."

"Do you really care whether I go?" he asked, with a strange light in his eyes.

"Of course I do; that is, if your health demands it."

"I have arranged to go soon," he said, speaking slowly, and watching her expression keenly all the while.

"I am satisfied," he said aloud, speaking unintentionally.

"Of what?" she asked quickly

"I was just wondering, Frank, if you loved me, and when I read your expression I inadvertently let my conclusion escape my lips. Am I right, Frank?" he asked, eagerly taking her hand.

She blushed deeply and quickly withdrew her hand.

"Certainly," she said with all the innocence of a child, adding quickly, "I love all my friends."

Mr. Springer was silent. He was not so well satisfied now. He realized that he had been mistaken. He had failed to comprehend the innocence of the girl.

"You are lavish in your affections," he said at last. "Do you love one of your friends more than another?"

"Oh, yes," she answered naively. "I love Mr. and Mrs. Henry best of all. Then Bess."

"Then Ralph," suggested Mr. Springer.

"Yes, then Ralph," she admitted frankly.

"Then Dr. Fields," again interrupted he.

"No, this is your place," she said, laughing.

Mr. Springer was again satisfied—satisfied of two things—that Frank didn't know what love was, and that Ralph stood ahead of him in her affections.

It only hastened his departure, but he left behind as true a friend as a man ever had.

Ralph met them at the gate and assisted Frank in alighting.

"What do you think?" said Frank, laughing, "Mr. Springer asked me if I loved him?"

Ralph stood pale and trembling.

Mr. Springer noticed it and could not resist the temptation of a moment's revenge. He had felt the slights of Ralph on more than one occasion, but didn't guess the cause. Now he knew.

"And what do you suppose her answer was?" he asked of Ralph.

A lump came into Ralph's throat. Frank studied his darkened features and hastened to say:

"Wasn't it a silly question?"

A light of triumph gleamed in Ralph's eye until she added:

"He knew very well I loved him——"

Ralph was petrified.

"Fourth," she concluded.

"Fourth?" stammered Ralph.

"Yes," said Mr. Springer earnestly, "in the order named: Your mother and father first, Bess second, you third, and myself fourth. Ralph, I am going away, and I came out this evening to say goodby."

Frank had left them at the gate.

Ralph offered his hand, which Clarence took firmly, saying:

"She is yours, Ralph; never fear of me coming between you. I only ask your friendship with hers."

Ralph returned the pressure heartily, and from that moment his heart went out to the invalid in a friendship that was broken only in the death of a noble character.

* * * * *

It was just one year from the opening of this story that we find our friends again assembled at a certain house. Everybody is happy. Kittie and Bess have been busy all day arranging certain deco-

rations. An altar had been built, and the young folks had been engaged, with many interruptions, in dressing it for the coming event. Bess had been called to the phone some half dozen times by Dr. Fields, who evidently had some weighty message, for it took repeated consultations and much time to adjust it."

"Now, Barton, don't be late to-night and keep everybody waiting."

"_____,"

"Yes, I heard it."

Vic Noodles had called all hands to the dining room to witness his triumph. He had succeeded in hanging a huge wedding bell over the centre of the dining table. In this he had been ably assisted by Kittie.

Ralph arrived early in the afternoon and immediately retired to the recesses of the parlor with Frank.

"Well, how goes the preparations?"

"Fine! You must look them over and criticise."

"I will do so, though I know that everything is all right. But I came this afternoon, Frank, to show you a letter from our old friend Springer."

"Oh, what is the matter, Ralph? You look so sad. Has anything happened to him?"

"Not yet, but his physician tells him that he cannot live long and that he must go into the mountains and live outdoors if he wishes even to prolong his life. How my heart aches for him."

"Mine, too, Ralph," said Frank, her eyes filling with tears.

They were suddenly aroused from the profound revery into which they had fallen by the arrival of Barton Fields, who, observing Frank's tears, immediately began his bantering.

Ralph read him the letter, which effectually silenced him.

"But come," said he. "This is no time to be sad. If Springer was here, he would be the gayest of the lot. Let us look over the arrangements."

A caterer had arrived and was busy with various baskets and bundles.

Everything was at last in readiness, and at seven o'clock the guests began to arrive. The wedding was to be small, only the family and a few of the closest friends.

The Rev. Mr. Jones was waiting at the altar, at the time appointed, when there was a bustle at the door and the bride entered the room, leaning heavily on the arm of the groom. They knelt at the altar while the minister offered a brief prayer.

"Eben C. Noodles," said the preacher, "do you take Katharine Brierly for your lawful and wedded wife?"

Then followed as merry a wedding feast as ever graced the marriage of youth and beauty.

Grandfather Noodles was again the gay cavalier he had been in his youth.

During the supper he announced that he had arranged for the education of the two girls. Kitty and Frank were to be placed under private instruction until the proper time should arrive for them to enter college. Frank in the end was to go to the Boston

School of Music, but not until she had first finished a university course.

"I mean to oversee the education of these girls personally," he said to Mr Jones. It shall be the finishing of my life's work. When they have finished the prescribed course,—then—well—we shall see."

Vic and Ralph exchanged glances and each sighed as he bowed to the indomitable will of the aged pilot of their destinies.

